

# Soldiers



Recruiting  
and Retention

New Hot Topics  
PAGE 64





**Cover Story** — Page 8

Without the valuable work done by recruiters, the Army could not attract and retain quality Soldiers.

— Montage by Paul Crank

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Soldiers | February 2006 | Vol



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Page 44



Page 8



Page 32



Page 38

## Features

### On Recruiting and Retention 8

Secretary of the Army Francis J. Harvey talks about the challenges of recruiting and retaining quality Soldiers, and about his vision for the Army's future.

### Bostick: Where We Stand 12

We talk with MG Thomas P. Bostick, commander of U.S. Army Recruiting Command, about the ways in which the Army both establishes and meets its recruiting goals.

### Recruiting Initiatives 16

The Army has developed several innovative ways to reach out to talented, motivated young people...

### Enlistment Incentives 18

...as well as introducing financial incentives that make an Army enlistment even more attractive.

### Recruiting in Soldier Country 22

The communities surrounding Fort Bragg, N.C., produce a regular crop of new Soldiers.

### Recruiting in Coal Country 28

For West Virginians, patriotism and financial security are both big inducements to choose a military career.

### Veteran Volunteer Force 32

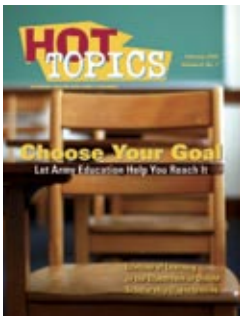
Members of the Germany-based — and much deployed — 1st Infantry Division re-enlist more often than most other Soldiers, and here's why.

### Military Entrance Processing Station 38

A common experience for new Soldiers, the MEPS is the first step on the road to a military career.

### Citizenship Ceremony Downrange 44

One hundred forty-three Soldiers from some 42 countries held up their hands and became American citizens during a ceremony at Camp Victory, Iraq.



At Page 64

## Departments

- 2 Mail Call
- 4 On Point
- 47 Focus on People
- 48 This Is Our Army



WHEN the people of this great nation think of the Army, they think of well-trained, well-equipped and well-led Soldiers carrying out a range of duties around the world. And yet most Americans are unaware of how those Soldiers came to wear the uniform.

The answer, of course, is that every Soldier in today's Army made a conscious, individual choice to serve the nation. And they were helped to realize that noble goal by the recruiters whose mission it is to fill the Army's ranks with qualified and dedicated men and women. In this issue of **Soldiers** we take a closer look at how recruiters do their important job.

For the view from the top, we offer a question-and-answer interview in which Secretary of the Army Francis J. Harvey

talks about the current state and future goals of the Army's recruiting efforts.

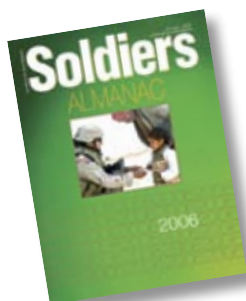
And in Heike Hasenauer's interview with MG Thomas P. Bostick, the commander of U.S. Army Recruiting Command shares his views on those and related topics.

And for a glimpse of how individual recruiters do their jobs, turn to Beth Reece's story about recruiting efforts in West Virginia and Heike's story of how the job is done in the towns near Fort Bragg, North Carolina.



*Gil High*

Gil High  
Editor in Chief



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## Soldiers

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Secretary of the Army  
Francis J. Harvey

Chief of Staff  
GEN Peter J. Schoomaker

Chief of Public Affairs  
BG Vincent K. Brooks

Chief, Command Information  
LTC Joseph M. Yoswa

#### Soldiers Staff

Editor in Chief: Gil High

Production Editor: Steve Harding

Art Director/Print Officer: Helen Hall VanHoose

Senior Editor: Heike Hasenauer

Associate Art Director: Paul Henry Crank

NCOIC: MSG Lisa Gregory

Photojournalist: Beth Reece

Special Projects Editor: Don Wagner

Graphic Designer: LeRoy Jewell

Executive Secretary: Arthur Benckert

Printing: Gateway Press, Inc., Louisville, Ky

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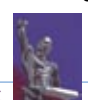
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Arvill Awards  
2002 and 2003



2003  
NAGC Blue Pencil  
Competition  
2004



## Sokorai as SOLDIERS' Soldier

I JUST read your excellent November article on SGT David Sokorai. It shows the true spirit of the American Soldier, especially those who have served and are serving with a variety of backgrounds and experience.

One slight complaint: The article misspelled SGT Sokorai's place of civilian employment as Upper Merian township. The correct spelling is Upper Merion.

**CSM Robert Zglenski, USAR**  
via e-mail

THE November article on SGT Sokorai was a great in-depth look at how one Soldier can embody the Army Values, and I applaud Sokorai for his dedication to serving our nation.

I hope that we all keep in mind, however, that every man or woman who chooses to serve in our country's military during these challenging times embodies the best of what it means to be an American.

Thank you all.

**James Caird**  
via e-mail

## A Promise Kept

I READ with great interest the November article on the award of the Medal of Honor to Korean War veteran Tibor Rubin. He is truly a hero, in every sense of the word, and I appreciate the chance to learn of his heroism both in combat and in a Chinese prison camp.

**Capt. Roger Heckheim, USAF**  
via e-mail

## Air Assault in Germany

IN the November article "Air Assault in Germany" SGT W. Wayne Marlow wrote that PV2 Hernandez "was a recent student in the first Army air-assault course taught in Germany." This is an error.

I completed the Air Assault Course at Sickles Army Airfield in Fulda in March 1993 and proudly wear my wings to this day. The cadre of the 4th Squadron, 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment, did a fine job and conducted a very professional course. The current course

may be the first in a few years, but it is certainly not the first.

**SFC J. Stubblefield**  
Fort Sill, Okla.

SGT Marlow's article brought back some vivid memories of being stationed in Germany in the late 1980s and early 1990s. The article was both motivating and accurate, detailing the fast-paced and challenging training, both physically and academically.

However, the statement that the current course is the first Air Assault School in Germany is inaccurate. The 11th ACR conducted an Air Assault Course at Sickles Army Airfield in Fulda. I attended and graduated from the course in 1990. Sickles Army Airfield closed a few years later and was turned over to the Germans.

Thanks for the memories!

**WO1 Anthony Lambert**  
via e-mail

## Guard or Reserve Family?

IN the November "Focus on People" section PFC Dan Balda wrote of a father and his two sons, all of whom are deployed to Iraq.

While he properly titled the piece "A Guard Family," in the body of the article Balda said the three were assigned to the "Army Reserve's Troop F, 278th Regimental Combat Team." The 278th is actually part of the Tennessee Army National Guard, not the Army Reserve.

**SFC Joseph A. Arrington**  
via e-mail

## Photo Credit Where Due

IN the November "On Point" photo feature you ran a picture of an Afghan woman proudly displaying her paint-marked finger after voting in the nation's first parliamentary elections.

Unfortunately, you credited the picture to SSG Ken Denny, when it was actually one of my photos.

**SSG Jacob Caldwell**  
via e-mail

*We've seen and used several of*

*your fine photos in the past, and we apologize for the error. Keep up the good work, and keep submitting to SOLDIERS!*

## The Right Uniform?

AFTER seeing several examples of the new Army Combat Uniform both in your magazine and in person, I have to say I'm really wondering what the uniform's designers were thinking when they came up with it.

First, it doesn't blend in at all in a woodland environment. In fact, it actually makes the wearer stand out against the foliage. If the Army wanted a digital uniform, why not just digitize the current BDU and DCU?

Second, it doesn't make any sense to pin anything on a combat uniform. Pin-on items have the potential to get hung up on anything (including load-bearing equipment and rifle slings, for example) and can tear the uniform. Not to mention the fact that the dammets wear out and the pins can then stick the Soldier.

And third, didn't the designers realize how noisy Velcro is? The last thing we need in combat is to have our uniforms making noise every time we have to get into the pockets.

A combat uniform is supposed to give Soldiers the maximum advantage on the battlefield. The Army's senior leaders need to address these issues and create a new combat uniform that is truly that — a combat uniform.

**SFC Ron Fergeson**  
via e-mail

## Soldiers values your opinion

*To comment, keep your remarks to under 150 words, include your name, rank and address and send them to:*

**Mail Call, Soldiers,**  
9325 Gunston Road, Ste. S108,  
Fort Belvoir, VA 22060-5581,  
or e-mail: [soldiers@belvoir.army.mil](mailto:soldiers@belvoir.army.mil)



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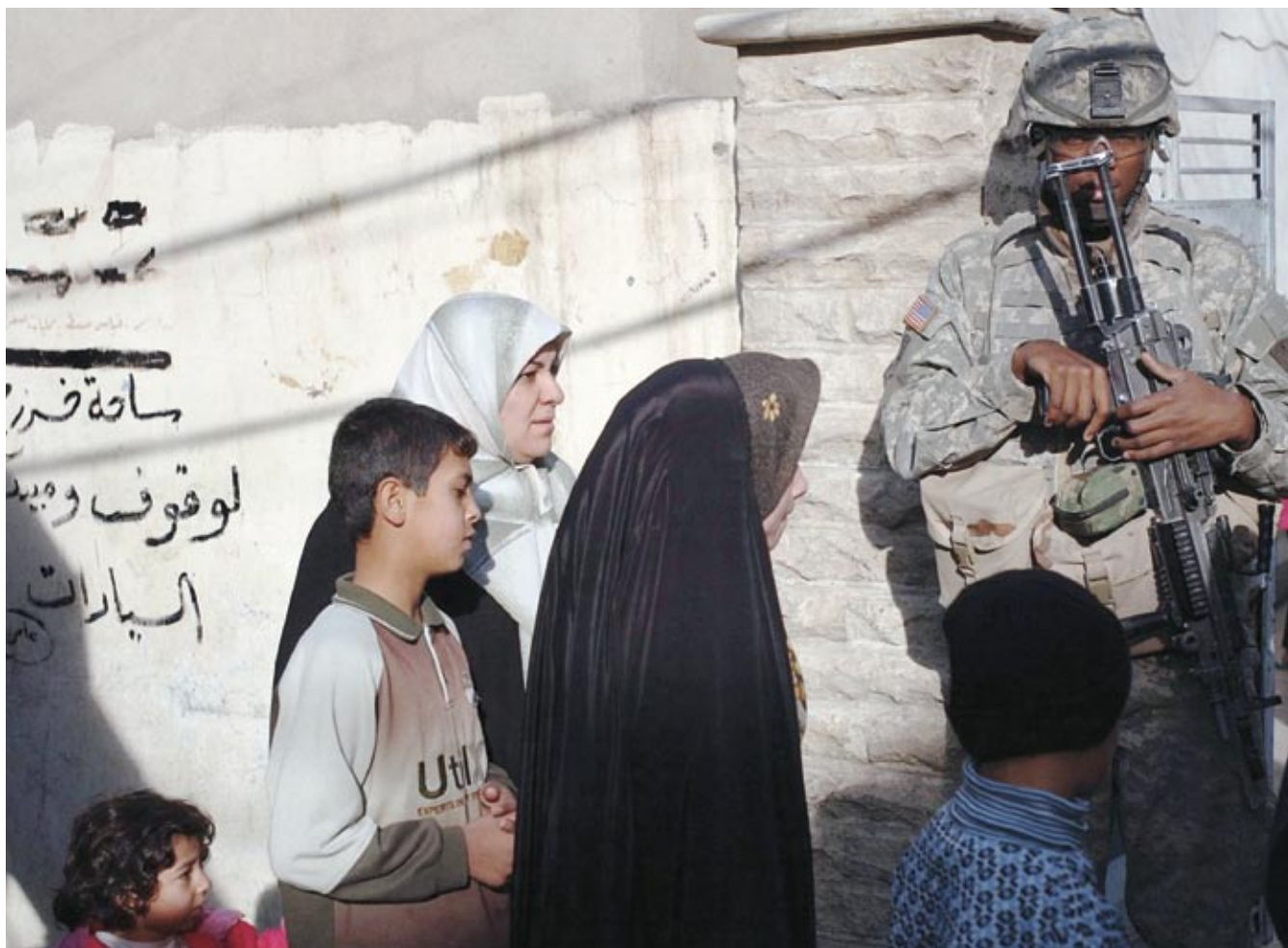


## Pakistan

SGT Kornelia Rachwal gives a young Pakistani girl a drink of water aboard an Army CH-47 Chinook helicopter as the child is being evacuated from Mazaffarabad to Islamabad as part of international relief operations following the earthquake that devastated the region.

— Tech. SGT Mike Buytas USAF





## ▲ Iraq

A Soldier from Company C, 1st Battalion, 17th Infantry Regiment, guards the gate to the Al Hadba Girls' School in Mosul, where a medical screening took place Nov. 26.

— Photo by L. Campbell

## ► Iraq

A team of scouts from Task Force 2nd Bn., 12th Cavalry Regiment, sweeps an area along the Euphrates River searching for hidden weapons caches.

— Photo by SPC Andy Miller







### ▲ Iraq

An Iraqi soldier shows the ink on his finger indicating he voted — along with other Iraqi security force members — on Dec. 12. Most Iraqi citizens voted Dec. 15 to elect the country's first free, permanent parliamentary government.

— Photo by Tech. Sgt. Andy Dunaway, USAF



### ▲ Pakistan

MAJ Bob Gahol from the 212th Mobile Army Surgical Hospital consoles a Pakistani earthquake survivor at Muzaffarabad.

— Photo by Airman 1st Class Barry Loo, USAF



### ▲ Iraq

SPC Darline Davis talks to Iraqi truckers to see if they need help fixing their vehicle. A member of the 99th Transportation Detachment's Movement Control Team, Davis works with the truckers moving cargo for the multinational forces and helps them get to their final destinations.

— Photo by SSG Fred Minnick





# On Recruiting a

Interview by Beth Reece Photos by SSG Carmen Burgess



**S**ECRETARY of the Army Francis J. Harvey learned the importance of serving the country from his father, who volunteered in organizations throughout his community. As the Army's top civilian, Harvey has spoken to youth and other groups, urging them to answer the call to duty, and has also spoken to currently serving Soldiers about the benefits of making the Army a career. Here, he addresses the challenges of recruiting and his vision of the Army's future.

**Q What do you see as being the current state of recruiting and retention?**

Fiscal year 2005 was a very good year for retention. Our goal was around 64,000, which was up from the previous year's goal of 56,000. We actually retained about 69,500, so that's great news. I think it's a reflection of the fact that our Soldiers know they're part of one of the most respected institutions in the United States, and the world. They're part of an organization that's making a difference.

Recruiting, however, has been challenging. It's not a crisis situation, but it is a situation in which we have concerns. In the active component we recruited about 73,400 against a goal of 80,000, which is the highest goal

we've had in five or six years. The reason we have a high goal is because we're trying to expand the operational Army by 40,000. You've got to keep that in perspective, because our average number of recruits has been around 74,400 over the last 10 years. So from a historical perspective we're not doing bad. However, we're trying to enlarge the Army so we need to achieve the 80,000.

From June to September we consistently exceeded our objectives. The numbers are just in for October, and we exceeded our objectives again. For five months in a row we've exceeded our objectives in the active component. And the National Guard exceeded its recruiting goal in October for the first time in more than a year.



**Q How is the Army going to continue enticing young people to join the Army, and Soldiers already serving to stay?**

We're going to appeal to young men and women in several ways.

First, we're going to remind them that answering the call to duty and serving the country is a great work of life. To me, it's the greatest work of life. It's giving back to the country the opportunity it's given to all Americans to progress, to have rewarding careers, to have a high quality of life, freedom and economic opportunities. We want to remind young people that at some time in their lives all Americans should give back to the country what the country has given to them.

# nd Retention



“On the active-component side, Soldiers will be deployed or ready for deployment one year in three.”

Second, we also make sure recruits — and their parents — know the Army will help them learn new skills and develop as individuals. The Army offers them the opportunity to have a very rewarding and fulfilling career, with self-development, progression and job satisfaction. And if they decide to leave after four or five years, they’ll have skills, values and personal discipline that are very attractive to private industry.

We certainly want to encourage the Soldiers we already have to stay in the Army. The compensation for making a career of the Army and staying in for 20 years is pretty good. And when Soldiers stay in long enough, they’re better equipped to get an even higher-paying job when they do get out.

Money is an obvious factor. But there are also the intangible benefits of

the job, like satisfaction and knowing you’re part of a wonderful organization that’s serving the people and the nation.

### **Q What can an active-duty Soldier enlisting today look forward to in the Army of the future?**

The Army of the future is centered around the modular force, which is brigade-based, rapidly deployable, flexible, more powerful and a more full-spectrum force. From a warfighting standpoint, the Army of the future is going to be a much more powerful and effective organization.

In parallel with that is the transformational part of our strategy. We’re modernizing our force by focusing on the ground forces through the Future Combat Systems program. As we

stand up the brigade combat teams and modernize the force, we are also going to begin to spiral in advanced technologies to better protect Soldiers. Not only will we be more effective from a combat point of view, but we’ll be providing better protection for Soldiers.

We also have a number of initiatives to improve the quality of life for Soldiers and their families. The residential community initiative is the wonderful, innovative privatization of our housing — and a tremendous improvement in terms of quality.

We have an immediate goal of getting all barracks up to minimum-quality standards and a long-range program to modernize them. We’re also going to fund installation accounts at 90 percent to sustain repair and maintenance, which is higher than it’s been in the past.



*On Recruiting and Retention*



**Q What can Soldiers and their families expect in terms of deployment?**

A lot of these initiatives directly impact deployment. One of the fundamental outputs of the Army modular force is the expansion of the active component from 33 brigade combat teams to 43. Our goal for the National Guard is to establish 34 brigade combat teams. So, if you look at what we call the rotational pool of brigades, we had 48 — 33 in the active Army and 15 enhanced brigades in the National Guard. Our baseline plan is to go to 43 and 34, or 77 combined, to develop the Army force-generation module.

On the active-component side, Soldiers will be deployed or ready for deployment one year in three. That means two years at home station. For the reserve component, it's one year in six — one year deployed or ready for deployment, and five years at home station. I know one thing that makes life very difficult for them is not knowing when they're going to deploy or where they'll deploy.


As we stand up these brigade combat teams, we're also going to designate them as life-cycle units, in which Soldiers can stay for one rotational cycle or two — or for three years or six years. This makes the Army more like industry, in that it allows individuals to balance their personal lives against their ability to move up in the organization and get promoted. They'll have to decide whether to stay at a particular place because they like it and their family likes it, or whether it's better to move for another job opportunity. We call this force stabilization, enabled by the fact that we have more brigade combat teams.

With more combat power, all these



side benefits come out. We'll be able to say to Soldiers: "You're going to have a better force, it's going to be modernized. You're going to have a better quality of life and you're going to have predictability in your lives." That's what all this means to the Soldiers. And, you're making one heck of a difference in this world, preserving the peace and the freedom of this country and defending its democracy. I think it's a very attractive proposition.

**Q Is there anything you'd like to say to Soldiers and their families?**

Soldiers should know that the number-one priority of the secretary of the Army is the welfare of Soldiers and their families. All these initiatives and strategies keep the Soldier in the forefront of our minds. The Soldier is our centerpiece. 



# Bostick: Where

Interview by Heike Hasenauer

Joyce Knight



MG Thomas P. Bostick  
Commander, U.S. Army Recruiting Command



**S**OLDIERS magazine recently spoke with MG Thomas P. Bostick, commander of the U.S. Army Recruiting Command, to obtain the latest information about the state of Army recruiting and what's in store for the future force.

**Q:** The reports we see concerning recruiting and retention change from month to month. Is the Army meeting its recruiting goals? What is the recruiting goal for 2006, and do we project further, into 2007?

**Bostick:** During this most challenging period for military recruiting, more than 92,700 young men and women have joined the Regular Army and Army Reserve. Although we do not recruit for the Army National Guard, it recruited an additional 49,000 Soldiers. U.S. Army Recruiting Command finished strong from June through September 2005 and, overall, we achieved the Regular Army accession mission eight months during fiscal year 2005.

The recruiting goal for the Regular Army in FY 05 was 80,000. We accessed 73,373, or 91.7 percent of the goal.

The recruiting goal for the Reserve



# We Stand



▲ The Regular Army recruiting goal for fiscal year 2005 was 80,000. The Army recruited 73,373 people, or 97.1 percent of the goal.

was 22,175. We accessed 19,400, or 87.5 percent of the goal.

Our recruiting goal for FY 06 is again 80,000 Soldiers for the Regular Army and 25,500 for the Reserve. Those are challenging numbers, but they're attainable. We're off to a great start, having met our goal in October.

We maintain planning figures as far out as five years, but those figures change, based on recruitment and retention results from the previous year.

**Q: Do the numbers of needed recruits each year change? Why?**

**Bostick:** The Department of the Army sets our recruiting and retention goals, based on its analysis of the required end strength. As the Army's end strength changes, so do our recruiting and retention goals.

**Q: Are we recruiting for specific MOSs?**

**Bostick:** Yes, in FY 05 we successfully recruited by MOS at more than 95 percent accuracy.

Within our overall mission, USAREC incorporates a number of "special missions," which include the targeting of prospects for the medical field, warrant officer corps, officer candidates, special forces, linguists, chaplains, etc.

**Q: For which MOS or MOSs is the highest monetary incentive being paid?**

**Bostick:** The maximum combination of cash bonuses for an enlistment of four or more years is \$20,000. The maximum for a three-year enlistment is \$10,000 for most of the Army's more than 150 entry-level jobs. The maximum for a three-year enlistment in some high-priority jobs is \$20,000. The maximum bonus for a two-year enlistment is \$6,000.

For recruits interested in filling a specific training seat, the Army offers seasonal bonuses, also referred to as "quick-ship" bonuses that range from \$1,000 to \$14,000, depending on the priority of the MOS and an applicant's willingness to accept an early ship date. [See accompanying box.]

**Q: Has the number of recruits increased in the past two years? If so, is this a direct result of operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom?**

**Bostick:** Yes, the number of recruiters has increased, but, no, the increase was based on the number of recruits DA projected as our mission – not as a direct result of the war on terrorism.

**Q: When did we begin using civilian recruiters? How many work in the United States?**

**Bostick:** USAREC and U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command awarded contracts for the contract-recruiting-company initiative required under the National Defense Authorization Act for FY 2001. Two civilian contractors received contracts to perform the full complement of recruiting services, including prospecting, selling and pre-qualifying prospective recruits, and ensuring that contracted applicants ship to their initial-entry training.

The pilot program began in the spring of 2002 in selected locations across the country. Civilian contract employees perform all the duties currently performed by Army leaders and recruiters in 10 recruiting companies.

Contract civilian recruiting companies are located in Dover, Del.; Wilmington, N.C.; Homewood, Ill.; Tacoma, Wash.; Harrisburg, Penn.; Jackson, Miss.; Dayton, Ohio; East Oklahoma City, Okla.; Granite City, Ill.; and Salt Lake City, Utah.

**Q: Does Army recruiting take place outside the United States?**

**Bostick:** We have recruiters in Germany, Japan and South Korea, as well as in all 50 states, Puerto Rico, American Samoa and Guam. The recruiters target American citizens living overseas.





Wait Kloppel (both this page)

▲ The recruiting goal for FY 2006 is 80,000 for the Regular Army and 25,500 for the Army Reserve. USAREC commander Bostick calls the numbers “challenging but attainable.”

## Q: What changes have taken place in recruiting in the past two to three years?

**Bostick:** We continue to develop and apply new techniques, incentives and resources to help attract and retain the right people as the environment changes.

One recent technique we cultivated is called the Army interview. This concept incorporates recruiters developing trust and credibility with their prospects by sharing their Army story, the recruiter’s personal experiences, the Army’s history, benefits, and anything else a prospect or influencer may want to know. Honest counsel is vital to recruiter success in demonstrating the value of joining the Army.

We’ve incorporated many process changes to constantly focus on giving recruiters the maximum ability to tell their Army story to the public and to make the recruitment process more efficient and easier for the recruit.

Regarding incentives, we recently increased the bonus availability for prospects interested in our “high-priority” MOSs to \$20,000. Congress also raised the recruitment age for Reservists to 39. By

expanding the market, we recruited 416 additional Soldiers into the Reserve in FY 05.

We have also worked several initiatives to increase the diversity and proper placement of the recruiter force to best connect with America. We have opened the recruiting opportunity up to 550 corporals and actively work to place them in their hometowns. We also work to match recruiter assignments with the recruiter’s cultural and special-language skills, thereby ensuring the Army opportunity is offered to all segments of America.

## Q: What are the major obstacles to recruiting young men and women today?

**Bostick:** The top three factors that affect recruiting include the war on terrorism, an improving U.S. economy and low unemployment rates, and waning support for military enlistment as a result of the first two.

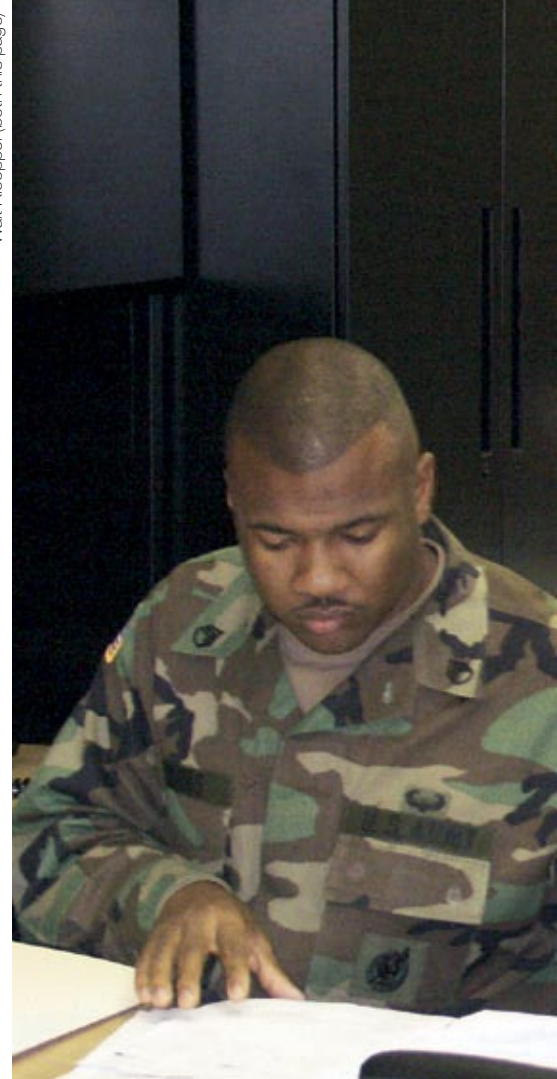
Of course, negative news from the Middle East regarding the war on terrorism deters some potential recruits. An improving U.S. economy also presents a challenge, as recruiters are directly competing with public and private industries for the same quality applicants. How-

ever, USAREC has several competitive programs and initiatives available for qualified applicants, including enlistment incentives, money for college, etc. [See related information on PaYS, etc.]

Historically, Army recruiting becomes even more challenging when the country is in a state of low unemployment.

## Q: Are there regions of the country more “ripe” than others for potential new recruits? Why is this so?

**Bostick:** Nearly every county in the United States had young men and women join the military last year. Youths from rural areas have been slightly more likely to join the Army than young



*Recruiting Command*



▲ Army recruiters working in cities throughout the nation last year recruited young men and women from virtually every county in the United States, with young people from rural areas being more likely to join than others.


people from more urban areas. The Army recruits from all walks of life and all levels of American society. Traditionally, the Army has had more success recruiting in the southern United States and in rural areas, but the Army does not specifically target young people from these areas.

Again, the benefits of Army service are available to all qualified applicants and appeal to American young people from rural, suburban and urban backgrounds.

**Q: Are operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom clearly affecting the influx of recruits?**

**Bostick:** Yes, parents, teachers, coaches, other family members, etc., have had an effect on our mission. Obviously, they are concerned about the welfare of their loved ones, and they don't want to see them

deployed or harmed in any way. Our recruiters must convince the people who have an influence on potential recruits, as well as the potential recruits, that a career in the Army is beneficial, and that Soldiers receive the best training in the world in preparation for potential mobilization.

In looking at our retention achievements for FY 05, each component achieved its retention goal: National Guard, 104 percent; Reserve, 102 percent and Regular Army, 108 percent. It's obvious that Soldiers in today's Army enjoy being Soldiers, so it's our job to "influence the influencers," convincing them that their loved one is joining a caring Army family with quality leaders, rigorous training, rock-solid values and a multitude of opportunities to learn and grow into a quality adult. 

## Recruiting/Retention Numbers

**THE Army's recruiting and retention goals and the number of new Soldiers who entered the Army in fiscal year 2005, respectively, are as follows:**

### ☒ RETENTION

Active Army: 64,162  
Army Reserve: 16,248  
Army National Guard: 32,570

### ☒ RECRUITING GOALS

Active Army: 80,000  
Army Reserve: 22,175  
Army National Guard: 63,000

### ☒ FY 2005 ACTUAL ENLISTMENTS

Army: 73,373  
Army Reserve: 19,400  
Army National Guard: 50,219

*Information provided by the Office of Army Personnel, G-1.*





▲ While the Army offers potential recruits a number of attractive incentives, often the most valuable thing recruiters do is to work personally with potential recruits to help them prepare for the physical challenges of military service.

# Recruiting Initiative

**T**HE Army's active-duty recruiting goal of 80,000 Soldiers in fiscal year 2005 was the highest it's been in five years, officials said.

To help recruiters meet the goal, officials announced several new initiatives, which included:

- ✕ Increasing the number of active-duty recruiters by 25 percent.
- ✕ Developing a new automated benefit tool used by recruiters to compare a military career with a civilian career, taking into account benefits and other factors.
- ✕ Working with Congress to increase the maximum amount for an initial-recruitment incentive. Only individuals enlisting into certain military occupational specialties would be eligible for the maximum amount.
- ✕ Establishing a \$1,000 "finder's fee" that rewards Soldiers for recommending potential recruits, and the Army Home Mortgage Program, which may offer Soldiers downpayments for homes.
- ✕ Creating the "Call to Duty" program, which brings Army leaders, congressmen, veterans organizations and civilian leaders associated with the Army to local communities to speak about the nobility of serving in the armed forces.
- ✕ Teaming Soldiers recently returned from Iraq and Afghanistan with recruiters nationwide.

A strong belief in the value of military service is what keeps people enlisting and re-enlisting in the Army. Those serving today will be able to look back with pride at what they have contributed, military officials said.



*Recruiting Initiatives*

## PaYS

*The U.S. Army Recruiting Command's Partnership for Youth Success, or PaYS, program was developed to help the Army attract talented young people who want to serve their country, but also want to help secure their future civilian success once their Army service is complete.*

*Under the terms of the agreement between USAREC and the PaYS partners, enlistees gain specific job training and qualifications that will prepare them for employment with their selected PaYS partners.*

*A database allows the recruit to choose a PaYS partner who is looking for the job skills he or she will gain in the Army.*

*As part of the enlistment process, the recruit signs a statement of intent to work for the PaYS partner upon completion of his or her term of service. This statement becomes part of the Soldier's official military personnel file.*

*Near the end of their enlistments, Soldiers will interview with the partner for a specific job at a specific location. The Army has 123 PaYS partners. These organizations have collectively loaded more than 375,000 jobs into the PaYS database.*

*More than 37,000 active Army and 3,200 Army Reserve Soldiers have enlisted with the PaYS option since the program began.*



# es

A strong belief in the value of military service is what keeps people enlisting and re-enlisting in the Army. Those serving today will be able to look back with pride at what they have contributed.

## SRAP

The Special Recruiter Assistance Program offers Soldiers who have served on the front lines an opportunity to share their experiences with local communities.

Enlisted Soldiers and officers (captain and below) who have served in operations Enduring Freedom or Iraqi Freedom may request to participate in the program.

Applications for the program are submitted online at [www.usarec.army.mil](http://www.usarec.army.mil). All requests are screened by the U.S. Army Recruiting Command's Enlisted Standards Division and Security Branch. Soldiers who pass the screening are notified of their approval to participate through their AKO e-mail addresses. The e-mail will also include the name and address of the recruiting stations where the participants will perform their SRAP duties.

Soldiers will report for SRAP duty wearing their desert camouflage uniforms, and with all required paperwork.

Soldiers selected for the program will discuss the Army with recruits participating in the Future Soldier Training Program. They'll also be required to speak to organizations, the media and other audiences.

Soldiers participating in this program are eligible for various awards and recognition for their work. Outstanding performance may be recognized through local certificates of achievement and letters of appreciation for quality referrals made to recruiting personnel. Recognition may also include a recommendation for an impact award.

## SMART

OPERATION "SMART," Sergeants Major of the Army Recruiting Team, supports the Army's recruiting activities by rewarding Soldiers who encourage potential recruits to enlist.

The program also creates a partnership and promotes camaraderie among the recruiting battalions and the installation/regional support command sergeants major in their battalion areas. Installation command sergeants major are charged with introducing Operation "SMART" to all command sergeants major and sergeants major on their installations.

Any Soldier who refers an applicant who ultimately enlists in the Regular Army or Army Reserve will receive a certificate and coin from the sergeant major of the Army.

At the end of each quarter, USAREC will publish the names of the Soldiers and units that provide the most referrals and the most enlistments from those referrals.

At the end of each fiscal year, the Soldier who has provided the most referrals and gained the most enlistments from those referrals will be invited to the annual Chief of Staff of the Army, Recruiter of Excellence award ceremony in Washington, D.C., where he or she will be personally recognized by the sergeant major of the Army.

To submit a referral, visit the Operation SMART page at [www.usarec.army.mil](http://www.usarec.army.mil) or call (800) 223-3735, extension 6-1292.

*Information provided by the U.S. Army Recruiting Command*



# Enlistment Incentives

## Active-Army Incentives

ACTIVE-duty recruits, including those with prior military service, who enlist for at least three years in the active Army and report for training before Dec. 26 may be eligible for an enlistment bonus of \$5,000. This bonus may be combined with other cash enlistment incentives.

## Maximum Active-Army Enlistment Bonuses

The maximum combination of cash bonuses for an enlistment of four or more years is \$20,000. The maximum for a three-year enlistment is \$10,000 for most of the Army's more than 150 entry-level jobs. And the maximum for a three-year enlistment in some high-priority jobs is \$20,000 (as of April 2005).

The maximum bonus for a two-year enlistment is \$6,000.

4-year	<b>Maximum</b>	<b>Date of Increase</b>
	\$20,000	November 1999
	\$12,000	March 1997
	\$8,000	October 1995

High Priority MOSs		
3-year	<b>Maximum</b>	<b>Date of Increase</b>
	\$20,000	April 2005
	\$17,000	February 2005
	\$15,000	August 2004

All other MOSs		
3-year	<b>Maximum</b>	2-year <b>Maximum</b>
	\$10,000	\$6,000

## National Call to Service, 15-Month Plus Training Option

Individuals who enlist for the 15-Month Plus Training Option will be eligible to select one of the following enlistment incentives:

- a cash enlistment bonus of \$5,000, payable upon completion of the initial active-duty obligation;
- Student Loan Repayment of up to \$18,000;
- a monthly education allowance for up to 12 months (\$816 per month, with the monthly payment based on current two-year Montgomery GI Bill rates, and subject to change); or
- a monthly education allowance for up to 36 months (\$408 per month, with the monthly payment based on current two-year Montgomery GI Bill rates, and subject to change).

## Active Army Education Bonus

Qualified applicants holding bachelors' degrees, who enlist for two or more years in any MOS, can earn \$8,000. Associate or two-year-degree holders can earn \$7,000. Qualified high-school graduates with 60 or more college semester hours can qualify for a \$6,000 bonus, and those with 30 to 59 college semester hours can earn \$3,000 for joining the Army.

The \$8,000 bonus for bachelor's degree holders and \$7,000 bonus for two-year-degree holders, who enlist for two or more years, were both added in August 2004. There previously were no bonuses for recruits with those education qualifications.

## Active Army Enlistment Bonus Combinations

Most cash enlistment incentives may also be combined with either the Army's Loan Repayment Program or the Army College Fund, but not both.

The Loan Repayment Program can repay up to \$65,000 in qualifying student loans. The Army College Fund offers up to \$71,424 for higher education.

◀ Army Chief of Staff GEN Peter Schoomaker congratulates young people he enlisted during the Pentagon's observance of the Army's 230th birthday.



SSG Carmen L. Burgess



## Army College Fund

The maximum benefit under the Montgomery GI Bill plus the Army College Fund increased from \$70,344 to \$71,424 in fiscal year 2006 for persons who qualify for this program. The Army College Fund is available to active-Army applicants who qualify for selected Army occupational specialties.

The Army College Fund amount is based upon the term of enlistment and the MOSs that are chosen at the time of enlistment.

FY 06 Army College Fund amounts:

two-year enlistment -	\$35,640
three-year -	\$53,424
four-year -	\$67,824
five-six year -	\$71,424 (the maximum)

## Loan Repayment Program

The Loan Repayment Program offers eligible recruits, who enlist for at least three years, up to \$65,000 toward qualifying student loans. LRP eligibility expanded to all MOSs in April 2005.

## Maximum Amount for Active-Army Seasonal Bonuses

Seasonal bonuses range up to \$14,000, depending on the priority of the MOS and an applicant's willingness to accept an early ship date.

The current range is \$1,000, \$3,000, \$6,000 and \$14,000.

These bonuses are for applicants with and without prior service who enlist for three or more years.

## Qualifying Jobs for a \$14,000 Bonus

Below are the top three-level MOSs that may qualify for the \$14,000 seasonal bonus.

Qualifying MOSs, as of Sept. 6, 2005, are subject to change, based on Army requirements.

### Level 1

Infantryman (11X)  
Fire Support Specialist (13F)  
Special Forces Candidate (18X)  
Explosive Ordnance Disposal Specialist (89D)  
Petroleum Supply Specialist (92F)

### Level 2

Cannon Crewmember (13B)  
Field Artillery Tactical Data Systems Specialist (13D)  
Multiple Launch Rocket System Crewmember (13M)  
Motor Transport Operator (88M)  
Special Electronic Devices Repairer (94F)

### Level 3

Field Artillery Fire-finder Radar Operator (13R)  
Air Defense Command, Control, Communications, Computers and Intelligence Tactical Operations Center Operator/Maintainer (14J)  
Cavalry Scout (19D)  
Satellite Communications Systems Operator-Maintainer (25S)  
Corrections Specialist (31E)  
Light Wheeled Vehicle Mechanic (63B)  
Quartermaster and Chemical Equipment Repairer (63J)  
Food Service Operations (92G)  
Radio and Communications Security Repairer (94E)  
Crypto Linguist-Analyst (98X)

The above MOSs also qualify for the \$20,000 maximum combined bonus for a three- or four-year enlistment. This excludes 89D, 98X, 25S, which have four-year minimum terms of service, and 18X, which has a five-year minimum term of service.



SSG Carmen L. Burgess

▲ Army Vice Chief of Staff GEN Richard Cody congratulates enlistees at the Boston Military Entrance Processing Station.





### Seasonal Bonus Amount

\$14,000	April 2005
\$10,000	February 2005
\$ 9,000	August 2004

### Active Army Bonus for Civilian Skills

Qualified applicants who already have civilian skills that the Army needs may be eligible for a \$3,000 bonus.

### Airborne Training Bonus

Qualified applicants who enlist for airborne training and a guaranteed airborne assignment in the active Army may be eligible for a \$3,000 bonus.

### Active Army OCS Bonus

All individuals enlisting for the active-Army Officer Candidate School option are eligible for an \$8,000 bonus, payable upon successful completion of OCS training and commissioning. This bonus was implemented in April 2005.

### Payment of Bonuses

Recruits who enlist for cash bonuses totaling more than \$10,000 will receive their initial payment of \$10,000 upon successful completion of initial-entry training. The remaining bonus amount will be paid in annual increments. Previously, the initial payment was no more than \$7,000. Enlistment bonuses totaling less than \$10,000 will be paid in one lump sum upon successful completion of initial-entry training.

The initial bonus payment was increased to \$10,000 in April 2005.

### Assignment Incentive Pay

Recruits who enlist in the active Army for three or more years for a skill required by the Army's priority units and agree to be assigned to an Army-designated priority unit may be eligible for the \$400 monthly assignment incentive pay for as long as they are assigned to an AIP unit (a maximum of 36 months or \$14,400).

AIP payments begin once the Soldier completes initial-entry training and reports to the designated priority unit.

Qualified recruits who participate in AIP remain eligible for cash enlistment incentives up to \$20,000, as well as the Loan Repayment Program up to \$65,000, or the Army College Fund up to \$71,424.

Assignment incentive pay is not an enlistment bonus incentive; it is available to new recruits at the time they complete basic combat training and advanced individual training. It is not retroactive.







SSG Ron Burke

◀ Assistant Secretary of Defense for Reserve Affairs Thomas F. Hall leads 48 young people in the oath of enlistment during a ceremony at Houston's Livestock Show and Rodeo.

## Army Reserve Education Bonus

Qualified non-prior service applicants holding bachelor's degrees, who enlist for three or six years, can earn \$4,000 if the Reserve unit has a priority vacancy. Associate or two-year degree holders can earn \$3,000. Qualified high-school graduates with 60 or more college semester hours can qualify for a \$2,000 bonus, and those with 30 to 59 college semester hours can earn \$1,000 for enlisting in a priority Army Reserve vacancy.

## Army Reserve Prior-Service Enlistment Bonuses

Individuals with prior military service who qualify and enlist for six years are eligible for a bonus of \$15,000; those who enlist for three years are eligible for a \$7,500 bonus.

## Reserve Bonus for Civilian Skills

Qualified Army Reserve applicants who already have civilian skills that the Army Reserve needs and enlist for six years in a critical-skill specialty may be eligible for a \$5,000 bonus.

## Reserve Officer, Warrant Officer Bonus

There is a \$6,000 bonus for qualified individuals who enlist in the Army Reserve for the Officer Candidate School (in an eligible area of concentration) or Warrant Officer Candidate Flight Training program.

## Reserve Student Loan Repayment Program

The Reserve Loan Repayment Program offers eligible recruits who enlist for at least six years in a Selected Reserve Troop Program Unit up to \$10,000 toward qualifying student loans. Selected job specialties offer up to \$20,000.

The RSLRP is also available to eligible recruits who choose the three-year enlistment option in a Selected Reserve Troop Program Unit. Eligible recruits can receive \$500 or 15 percent repayment on the outstanding balance of qualifying student loans (whichever is greater) for each year in the TPU, up to \$4,500. Selected job specialties offer up to \$9,000.

Recruits will serve the remainder of their eight-year military service obligation in the Individual Ready Reserve.

## Reserve Chaplain Bonus

Individuals who enter the Army Reserve to serve six years as a Reserve Troop Program Unit chaplain may be eligible for a bonus of up to \$6,000. The bonus is payable in a lump sum following the completion of the Chaplain Officer Basic Course, which must be completed within 36 months of commissioning. — *U.S. Army Recruiting Command*

## Army Reserve Incentives

### 09L IRR Middle Eastern Translator Aide bonus

The enlistment bonus is \$10,000 for eligible individuals who speak certain Middle Eastern languages and enlist as translator aides in the Individual Ready Reserve.

Seasonal	Bonus amount	Date of increase
	\$10,000	March 2005
	\$7,000	August 2004 (introduced)

## Army Reserve Maximum Enlistment Bonus (Non-Prior Service)

Qualified Army Reserve applicants without previous military service who enlist for six years may qualify for combined bonuses of up to \$10,000, depending on the Reserve unit vacancy and how quickly the individual can report to training.

Army Reserve Soldiers also must agree to remain in the Inactive Reserve for two more years — a total obligation of not less than eight years.

Recruits without prior service who enlist for the new three-year Reserve enlistment option may also be eligible for enlistment bonuses of up to \$10,000, depending on the Reserve unit vacancy and how quickly the individual can report to training. Soldiers also must agree to remain in the Inactive Reserve for the remainder of their eight-year military service obligation.

The three-year enlistment option was implemented in April 2005.





# Recruiting in Sold

Story and Photos by Heike Hasenauer





**W**HEN you're an Army recruiter, "it helps to be in the heart of

Army country," said SFC Douglas Mitchell, a former recruiter who has also served as the Fayetteville, N.C., Main Recruiting Station commander.

Mitchell is assigned to the Fayetteville Recruiting Company, which has jurisdiction over five recruiting stations in the area, including Fayetteville, Sanford, Spring Lake, Lumberton and Rockingham.

Today he trains recruiters whose "beats" are Fayetteville and the surrounding small southern towns that are largely affected, socially and economically, by the 46,000 Soldiers assigned to nearby Fort Bragg.

Anyone who knows about Fort Bragg and the proud history of its major tenants — the XVIII Airborne Corps, U.S. Special Operations Command and 82nd Abn. Division — knows it's one of the Army's largest installations and that its Soldiers are among the Army's elite, the first responders to hostile situations around the world.

The military presence here is definitely a contributing factor to the Fayetteville Recruiting Co.'s success, as evidenced by the fact that the U.S. Army Recruiting Command has ranked the company number one in the nation in recruiting over the past two years, Mitchell said.

Successful recruiting can also be attrib-

SSG Carl McCord of the Sanford Recruiting Station chats with a young man — just about to depart for basic training — whom he recruited some months earlier. Listening in is the young man's sister.

# ier Country





◀ A graduate of the nine-month New Recruiter's Program, McCord ranked at the top of the Fayetteville RC's recruiter charts by bringing in some 30 new recruits during his trial period.

## New Recruiter on the Block

SSG Carl McCord, who's assigned to the Sanford Recruiting Station, recently completed the nine-month New Recruiter's Program, which is basically an on-the-job training program.

Upon completing the program, McCord went before a board, which reviewed his record and recommended he continue recruiting new Soldiers into the Army's ranks.

It's no wonder. McCord ranked at the top of the Fayetteville RC's recruiter charts, bringing in some 30 recruits during his trial period.

On a typical day he stops by several high schools, leaving his business card with guidance counselors and checking that the schools still have enough brochures for students who might be interested in joining the Army. He also visits shops in the local strip malls, fast-food places and convenience stores.

"As a recruiter, you have to be a talker," McCord said. "You have to be able to strike up a conversation and ask questions. Find out what high school a student is attending. Ask kids if they have plans.

"Some business managers frown on the practice of recruiters talking to their employees. Others actually support us," said McCord, whose father was a recruiter when McCord was in high school and encouraged him to join the Army for educational benefits.

Recruiters used to do sales presentations to get new recruits, McCord said. "Now we're counseling kids about their futures and their goals in life."

uted to good leadership, Mitchell said.

"It takes motivation to be a good recruiter. You have to want to come to work in the morning. Without positive leadership, you can sit around and go nowhere," he said.

As a nine-year veteran recruiter, "I know a recruiter has to keep working at staying motivated," Mitchell said, "because what motivated you last month might not motivate you this month."

Mitchell's philosophy is that recruiting is a recruiting station mission and its recruiters' efforts should be a collective mission.

"As a recruiter, you

have to develop yourself as a member of a team," he said, "because you might spend 12 hours a day and two Saturdays a month together."

Mitchell also said that recruiting is seasonal. When kids are out of school a recruiter has to know where they hang out. "Don't stereotype," he said. "Don't look at someone and prejudge whether he or she would make a good candidate.

"New recruiters aren't as talkative as I'd like them to be," Mitchell continued. "They need to talk to everyone they see. Somewhere along the way someone will ask a question and will want to listen to the recruiter tell the Army story."



*Recruiting in Soldier Country*

“As a recruiter, you have to be a talker. You have to be able to strike up a conversation and ask questions. Find out what high school a student is attending. Ask kids if they have plans.”

Today’s “typical” recruit, McCord said, is 20 years old and is a high school graduate looking for a way to go to college.

“He or she has typically spent two years working at various unrewarding jobs before coming into the recruiting station to see what we have to offer,” McCord added.

Advertisements about the Army, which have saturated the media, have made McCord’s job easier, in some respects. That’s because potential recruits already know a lot about the Army when they visit a recruiting station. They’ve already done their homework and have an idea of what job they want to go into, he said.

Their predetermination, however, sometimes impedes the recruiting effort “because the potential recruit gets tunnel vision; he sees only the job he wants. If he can’t qualify for that job, he no longer wants to consider enlisting.”

McCord has to tell potential recruits: “If you want to go into military intelligence, medical or aviation specialties, you have to enlist for six years.” For some, the initial thought of signing up for six years is simply too big a commitment.

McCord can then discuss the education benefits that accompany longer enlistments. “Everyone gets the G.I. Bill,” he tells them. “But the Army College Fund is based on number of years’ enlistment.”

Today, potential recruits often ask about the possibility they’ll go to war.

“Being in a combat environment is a big concern to most potential

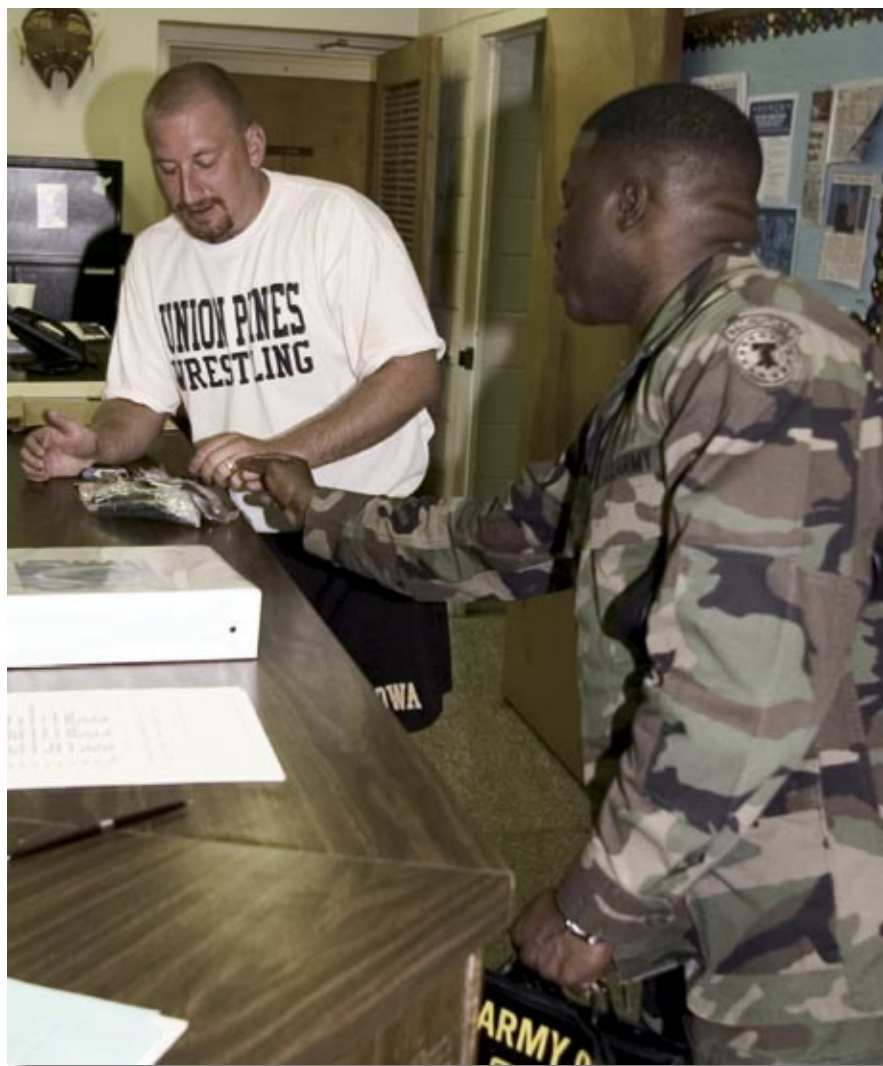
recruits,” McCord said. “They ask if they’ll have to deploy, and I have to tell them ‘yes.’ That’s the only answer I can give them. The ‘when?’ is something I can’t answer. I tell them it depends on what unit you’re assigned to and whether that unit recently redeployed.”

McCord also tells a prospective recruit that he’ll do the job the Army trained him to do if he does deploy and that there’s a great deal of satisfaction

in supporting a cause greater than your own, he said.

But fighting in Afghanistan or Iraq hasn’t been a big drawback to recruiting, McCord said. “Some people join the Army because they want to go to Iraq. Others want to come in because a family member was in the Army and left a good impression of the service with them.

The latter was the case with new recruit Charles Vought.



► On a typical day McCord stops by several high schools, leaving his business card with guidance counselors and checking that the schools still have enough brochures.



Sometimes the impression a recruiter leaves with a family member rubs off onto a young person who's looking for an opportunity to enrich his or her life.

"I've been around Soldiers," he said. "I have family members in the military."

Like 80 percent of those McCord has recruited, the 25-year-old Vought was employed but not happy with the pay and benefits he was getting. He also wanted to get away from the area and see something new.

On a sweltering day in August, he was out on the Lee County Senior High School track course, running laps to complete a two-mile, pre-basic-training physical-fitness requirement for the Army.

As McCord stood on the sidelines with bottles of water and a stopwatch, cheering the struggling Vought on, Vought finished the test with only four seconds to spare.

He'd never forget the day he became a recruit, Vought said. Besides the endurance test, he'd remember McCord's confidence in him, and the encouragement he received from him and several other recruiters who had come to the field to show their support.

On that day, Vought said, he not only completed the required PT test

that would allow him to begin his military training, but he could begin to meet a more important, longer-range goal — achieving the promises he'd made to himself about what he was going to accomplish during his three-year enlistment.

"I'm going to become more physically fit, and quit smoking," among other things, said Vought, who was to undergo basic at Fort Jackson, S.C., and advanced individual training at Fort Meade, Md., the latter to become a heating- and air-conditioning systems repairer.

McCord drove Vought home to get some rest and then headed down to the county courthouse with several DD Form 369s, requests for police-records checks he needed to have run on several prospective recruits.

He was more than a little disappointed when he picked up a form he'd left a week earlier and learned that one applicant had a record of writing bad checks and had a day-in-court appointment mid-month.

"It happens sometimes," McCord said of the lengthy periods of interviews, meetings, paperwork, tests — and personal caring for the young men and women who want to improve their lives — that sometimes suddenly, abruptly end.

"There has to be a balance of giving qualified people a chance to improve themselves, to grow and learn, and keeping those who do join from being targeted by crooks," McCord said of his disappointment that this potential recruit didn't meet the Army's standards.

◀ Successful recruiters must be able to strike up conversations with potential recruits no matter where they encounter them — even in the aisles of the local supermarket.



*Recruiting in Soldier Country*

► McCord uses virtually any opportunity to interact with young people who might be interested in military service, and shows genuine interest in their goals and aspirations.

McCord's disappointment didn't last long, however. He crossed the street to his car and headed to the local Food Lion, where he talked to a girl stocking ice cream about whether or not she enjoyed her work, her life.

"Many of the people we talk to in passing do give us a call," McCord said. "You just never know who it's going to be." Sometimes the impression a recruiter leaves with a family member rubs off onto a young person who's looking for an opportunity to enrich his or her life.

In the parking lot, an elderly woman approached McCord. "You walk like you're in the Army," she said. "My nephew was in the 82nd Abn. Div. He spent two tours in Vietnam. He loved the Army, and we were so proud of him."

A former Officer Basic Course field artillery instructor at Fort Sill, Okla., McCord was selected to be a recruiter while at that post.

"I was blessed to have come to the Fayetteville Recruiting Co., because its recruiters have been at the top of the game for several years," McCord said. "Fort Bragg helps us out a lot. People see the Soldiers at Bragg. They see their new cars and trucks. And they have lots of opportunities to talk to Soldiers. Many of the civilians say, 'That's the way I want to go.'"

McCord acknowledges, too, that he had good leaders. "I didn't know how to recruit. I had to study the good recruiters. I told myself, 'If I'm in one of the best recruiting companies, I want to be one of the best recruiters.'"

The recruiter-education process

involved learning to talk to prospective recruits by phone, and how to strike up conversations with people he didn't know.

Soon McCord was making 100 phone calls per week. "Of those, I get about 10 appointments with prospective recruits per week," he said. Standard practice is that two recruiters visit a prospective recruit's home.

Each of the Fayetteville Recruiting Co.'s recruiters is assigned particular target areas, by ZIP code. McCord's include the cities of Sanford, Robins, Carthage, Vass and West End, N.C.

McCord travels roughly 500 miles each week, "sweeping" shopping centers and other places frequented by the target recruits — 17 to 34 year olds.


New recruit Justin P. Jones, 18, realized on his own that being a cook in a local restaurant wasn't what he wanted to do for the rest of his life. Jones had dropped out of high school,

then completed his GED and 17 semester hours of college.

His mother encouraged him to join the Navy, while his dad favored the Army. Finally, Jones chose the Army, rationalizing that since he'd spent much of his life out in the fields and woods, hunting, fishing and working the land, Army life would be more appropriate than life at sea.

Jones went into transportation supply.

He and Vought arrived together at the Military Entrance Processing Station in Raleigh, N.C., their last stop for final processing before shipping out to basic training.

And it was McCord who drove them there and ensured they and the folks he handed them over to had everything they needed from him to make the new recruits' transition into the Army as smooth and positive an experience as possible. 





# Recruiting in Coal Country



Story and Photos by Beth Reece

**F**OR every recruit there's a reason. Some want to escape small towns, others want to skip college or need the money for tuition.

"People should join the Army because of the intangibles, because it's a place where they can grow and gain personal courage," said SSG Marco Robinson after wrapping up three years of recruiting duty in Beckley, W.V., last fall.

West Virginia has among the highest number of veterans in the nation per capita. The scarcity of jobs and low minimum wage may have made Robinson's job easier than if he'd worked in a big city where jobs were plentiful.

"But recruiting is tough. It's not for everyone," said Robinson, who became one of the Army's star recruiters after being named Top New Recruiter for consistently enrolling Soldiers into the Army's ranks.

Robinson's success was not without sacrifice.

He and Army recruiters in towns throughout America must work long hours and weekends, and are under incessant pressure to meet quotas.

The media made recruit-

ers' jobs even tougher last year, publishing front-page stories saying the Army had missed its recruiting goal by thousands.

"When people see that recruiting is down, they mistake it as a reflection on the Army," Robinson said. "It doesn't mean recruiters aren't doing their jobs, or that the Army isn't doing its job."

And, for the record, last year's goal of 80,000 was the Army's highest in more than five years. The final count of 73,373 recruited was not dramatically different from the average of the past 10 years, at 74,400.

## Strategy

What works for one, doesn't work for all. One recruiter may be successful making 200 phone calls a day, while another does well networking at the local fishing hole or shooting range. Robinson's best game is word of mouth.

When he helped high-school seniors land nice jobs or big bonuses for joining the Army, they told their friends. And parents mentioned to their co-workers and acquaintances that their sons and



▲ Teenagers from a neighboring county visit the Beckley Recruiting Station to see what the Army has to offer.



SSG Marco Robinson was named Top New Recruiter for consistently enrolling Soldiers in the Army's ranks during his three years at the Beckley Recruiting Station.





◀ Robinson works with a high-school graduate who is taking a mini version of the standard Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Test.

war-fighting force. Our job is to be in harm's way, to prevent things from happening. That said, not everyone goes to Iraq, and not everyone is out there looking for Osama," he said.

"You have to break it down and explain that just because you go to war doesn't mean you'll be sitting in downtown Baghdad shielding your buddy from bullets," Robinson added. "Most people I talked to realized I gave honest answers, and those who said they wouldn't join if they had to deploy overcame their fears and gave the Army a try after all."

Of the Soldiers Robinson recruited, many drop by the station after training just to say "hi", and sometimes to say "thanks." When one Soldier Robinson called "Randy" returned home on leave after a tour in Iraq, he stopped in for a visit.

"I've got \$3,500 in the bank, two cell phones, and a new car. I can't believe all the stuff I have now," Randy said.

"In his case, the gain was mostly materialistic, but to see where this guy came from — a tin-can trailer with plywood floors covered in cardboard — and see what he's achieved, it was great for me to be part of the change in his life," Robinson said.

## Up to Standard

The Army's drive to increase the number of active-duty Soldiers and brigade combat teams in the next three years doesn't mean the Army will take just anyone, volunteer or not.

New recruits have to be clean with the law, drug free and hold a high school diploma or equivalent. In Beckley and surrounding economically depressed counties, recruiters occasionally find themselves turning away volunteers because they're high

daughters were enlisting.

"When the people I help mention my name in passing to someone else, eventually a friend of a friend of a friend will come to me with an interest in the Army," he said.

Rule number one in selling Army life to prospective recruits: never lie, said Robinson.

"In a community this small you don't want to lie because you're go-

ing to see that person's mother at the supermarket," he joked. "But really, you don't even want to bend the truth. Just because basic training isn't hard for one person doesn't mean it's not a big deal to someone else."

When kids and parents asked tough questions like, "Will I have to go to war?" Robinson, like most recruiters he knows, issued straightforward answers.

"The Army is a war-deterring and



*Recruiting in Coal Country*

“I’ve had the chance to meet and put in some pretty good Soldiers, people I wouldn’t be afraid to sit in a foxhole with,” Robinson said.

school dropouts, or on drugs.

“All we can do is look at them and say, ‘You’ve got an issue. Come back to me when the Army is better than shooting up or smoking weed,’” he said. “Many of them eventually do turn themselves around and come back to us for better options.”

If they didn’t, Robinson wasn’t sorry. The quality of one squared-away recruit outweighs that of 10 who don’t fit into the Army’s mold, he said.

“I’ve had the chance to meet and put in some pretty good Soldiers, people I wouldn’t be afraid to sit in the foxhole with,” he said.

## Struggle

When Robinson began recruiting in 2002, he rated the job a three on a scale of one to 10, 10 being the hardest. By the end of his tour, he rated it 9.5.

“What changed? A lot of people want to blame the war, but I think it’s a shift in the thought patterns of society, and that today’s younger generation is very self-focused and less patriotic,” he said.

The high school seniors Robinson dealt with were reluctant to commit, he said, and more comfortable seeking employment in coal mines.

“It’s not that they really want to work there, but they believe those places are the only viable options available to them,” he said. “Many of them have hopes and dreams — they just haven’t planned a course of action to achieve them.”

Others simply couldn’t see life beyond the mountains of West Virginia.

“It scares a lot of them to think of being overseas. They’ve never stepped foot out of West Virginia, so anything else is foreign to them,” he said.

1SG William Lockler is also part

of the Beckley Recruiting Battalion, but works in Johnson City, Tenn. Having recruited in both Tennessee and Pennsylvania, he’s developed a theory on why people of different regions enlist in the military.

“Reasons for joining are often based on where recruits live. In the North they join for career reasons, in the South they join more because of pride,” he said.

While most recruiters traditionally target 17- and 18-year-olds on the verge of high-school graduation, Robinson found many of his prospects to be older in his final year in Beckley.

“My recruits’ average age changed from 18 to 23, to people who’d been out of high school for awhile. Some tried college and it didn’t work for them, or they couldn’t afford to pay for it. Sometimes, it was a simple case of Mom harping on them to find a job, or they’d started to realize it’s a difficult world out there.”

College graduates are now using the Army to gain or broaden their experience. One of Robinson’s most memorable recruits was a French and English teacher, who now does counter-intelligence work in Hawaii.

## Reward

Whether they’re for or against the war in Iraq, most West Virginians still esteem service members.


“It makes my day when

➤ Recruiters like Robinson spend countless hours getting to know school administrators who might link them up with students interested in the military.

I stop at the gas station on the way to work and someone comes over to shake my hand and say they appreciate my service,” Robinson said.

Since taking on recruiting, Robinson’s duties in the human-resources field have shifted to the civilian workforce. His transition back to regular duty, therefore, meant reclassifying. At press time, Robinson was completing the Basic NCO Course at Fort Jackson, S.C. After that, he hopes to either join the Army’s retention team or attend warrant officer school.

Eager to return to the regular Army, Robinson said his years spent recruiting in Beckley have made him a better leader.

“I’ll go back with a better understanding of the world around me, and realizing how lucky I am to be in the Army. A lot of the people don’t have the luxuries we enjoy in the military,” he said. 







# Veteran

Story by Heike Hasenauer




# Volunteer Force

**S**OLDIERS who have gone to war often speak of their compelling desire to return to the fight, to stand shoulder-to-shoulder with their comrades to help beleaguered nations escape oppression — but mostly to be beside their comrades.

Soldiers from the Würzburg, Germany-based 1st Infantry Division re-enlisted more often than Soldiers in any other unit in the Army during the first two quarters of 2005, said division spokesman MAJ Bill Coppennoll, at a time when the division was deployed to Iraq. They, who often speak of such motivators to re-enlistment, are perhaps the Army's best ambassadors for recruiting.

SGM Tim Wallace, SFC Carol Lehman and MSG Shawn Butler are among the



Soldiers of the 1st Infantry Division undertake a sweep for improvised explosive devices. Members of the Germany-based division re-enlisted more often than any other Soldiers in the Army during the first two quarters of 2005.

SPC Elizabeth Erste





▲ Soldiers of the 2nd Bn., 2nd Inf. Regt., take up fighting positions in a house in Fallujah. Despite frequent enemy contact, more than 4,000 division members re-enlisted while in Iraq. The division also gave away \$24.8 million in bonus money in fiscal year 2005.

division's 22 career counselors, most of whom deployed to Iraq with the division in 2005.

Their efforts may well be why more than 4,000 Soldiers, roughly one third of the division, re-enlisted in Iraq and why the division gave away \$24.8 million in bonus money in fiscal year 2005, said Lehman.

"We saturated the forward-operating bases with career counselors who provided Soldiers the latest information on re-enlistment policies, options and bonuses, to ensure both the needs

of Soldiers and of the Army were met," Lehman said.

"Most of the Soldiers re-enlisted strictly to help meet the needs of the Army," Wallace said. Only 30 percent re-enlisted for station-of-choice guarantees or other incentives, including training for another military occupational specialty.

The fact is, back-to-back deployments and an uncertain future — much of the division will either convert as part of Army Transformation, inactivate or return to Fort Riley, Kan., this summer — have not negatively affected retention, Coppernoll added.

"A Soldier isn't going to re-enlist in a unit where he's not happy. Our Soldiers felt comfortable downrange," Lehman said. "They don't mind

"It's a commonly held view that dangerous situations deter re-enlistments, but that's not what we see," Butler said.



deploying if they know they and their families will be taken care of.”

“Soldiers train and train,” added Butler, the division troop counselor. “When they get to do what they’re trained to do, it gives them a real sense of value.

“It’s a commonly held view that dangerous situations deter re-enlistments, but that’s not what we see,” Butler said.

Something happens between people when they’re taking cover from an explosion, “lying on top of each other to protect one another, and laughing because they’re so scared,” Butler explained.

A Soldier knows the good he’s doing in a combat theater; civilians may not, Lehman added. 📌



### SGT Leroy Warren and family

“If there’s a decrease in the number of Soldiers coming into the Army, there’s definitely an increase in the number of Soldiers who are staying in,” said SGT Leroy Warren.

A warehouse supply clerk with the division’s Company A, 701st Main Support Battalion, in Kitzingen, Warren is also the company’s retention NCO.

“We awarded over \$200,000 in bonus money just in my company,” Warren said. The money went to Soldiers who re-enlisted within the first months we were in Iraq.

“One Soldier knocked on my door in the middle of the night to re-enlist, not only for the bonus money, but because he felt strongly about our mission in Iraq. He had no doubt that we’re doing good things for the Iraqi people,” said Warren, who re-enlisted in February 2005.

“My love of the Army and my deployment to Iraq are the main reasons I re-enlisted,” Warren said. “When I got outside the military compound walls and saw how the Iraqi people lived, I just couldn’t believe it. They were living in plastic shelters, among garbage. I believe everyone should have the freedom to grow and prosper.”

When he first joined the Army Warren didn’t really understand why Soldiers salute the flag or support leaders, he added. “Today, I don’t even think that you have to go to a combat environment – but, rather, to a different country and an entirely different culture to be able to appreciate where you live.

“If you’re a Soldier, it’s not just because you take the oath of enlistment. It’s something that grows in you over time,” he said, suggesting the evolution a Soldier undergoes is marked by memories of service and the comrades a Soldier learns to love and respect during a mutual and rewarding journey.





## SSG Gabriel Barkdull and family

As the retention NCO for Headquarters and HQs. Co., 1st Bn., 18th Inf. Regt., SSG Gabriel Barkdull re-enlisted 97 initial-term Soldiers during the fiscal quarter before his unit deployed to Iraq. He also re-enlisted 18th Inf. Regt. Soldiers while they were in Iraq, in such places as the notoriously dangerous Samarra and Mosul.

“We were supposed to re-enlist 11 career Soldiers in fiscal year 2004,” Barkdull said. “We re-enlisted 27. And we were supposed to re-enlist 104 initial-entry Soldiers. We re-enlisted 107.”

## SGT Wayne Jack

SGT Wayne Jack enlisted in the Army in New York, right out of high school. He re-enlisted in January 2005, a month before his unit — HQs. Supply Co., 601st Avn. Spt. Bn., from Ansbach and Katterbach — returned to Germany from Iraq.

“It was my fourth deployment in 10 years,” Jack said. Earlier, he’d been deployed to Somalia, Haiti and Kosovo. “But Iraq was the longest deployment, and I saw more action than ever before.

“We experienced 32 engagements during the year I was in Iraq,” he said.

Why, then, would anyone want to re-enlist, knowing he could be right back in the same place, in a similar situation?

Jack said simply, “I love the military and the chance to travel and do what I was trained to do.”



## SGTs Bradley and Renae Williams, brother and sister

SGTs Bradley and Renae Williams are cooks with HHC, 121st Signal Bn., in Kitzingen. The brother and sister entered the Army together in June 2001. He deployed to Iraq in February 2003 with the 101st Airborne Div. She was in the 121st, on orders to go to Iraq.

“I re-enlisted while I was in the 101st, so I could be reassigned to my sister’s unit and deploy to Iraq again when her unit deployed,” Bradley said.

While they were there they both re-enlisted, he for the second time. She signed on for four more years and an \$8,000 bonus, he for six years and a \$10,000 bonus.

“I was always on the road in Iraq. That was the whole point of my re-enlisting. I wanted to be the one out on the road, rather than have my sister out on the road often,” Bradley said.



### SSG Tim Embery

British by birth, SSG Tim Embery works at HHC, 1st Inf. Div., as an operations NCO for the command sergeant major.

"In 1992 I'd been living in New York for eight years, and I'd always wanted to be a Soldier, so I enlisted in the Army."

By the time five years had passed, Embery hadn't fulfilled the goals he'd set for himself — among them seeing the world, making sergeant first class and becoming a drill sergeant — so he, too, re-enlisted.

"The British soldiers I met in Iraq were actually kind of jealous of me," Embery said, "because they think the U.S. Army has more amenities than the British army. They think we're spoiled. And, yes, we do, and we are. We're looked after downrange; we have the best equipment, and we're fed very well."

Embery joined the Army late in life, he said, at 26. "I'm 31 now. But I didn't know what I wanted to do when I was 18. The Army gave me breathing space, allowed me to figure out what I wanted, and to meet a lot of great people, and serve my country.

"It's not for everyone," he added. "Just as college isn't for everyone. Different people shine in different areas. The bottom line is that Soldiers don't stay in the Army today if they aren't satisfied that the Army's taking care of them and their families — and that they're making an important contribution to the future."

"In the next few years, we're going to have the strongest Army with the best leaders we've ever seen," Wallace concluded. "Because we've re-enlisted so many young Soldiers since September 2001 who now have more combat experience than older Soldiers."





**B**Y 0515 some 100 new recruits had arrived by bus at the Military Entrance Processing Station in Raleigh, N.C., and were sitting in various areas of the MEPS awaiting physical exams, written testing and the oath of enlistment.

They would be entering the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps and Coast Guard, but Willis Council, assistant senior counselor for the Army at the Raleigh station — himself a 20-year Army veteran — said: “We typically get more Army applicants than applicants applying to any of the other services.”

U.S. Military Entrance Processing Command spokesman Gaylan Johnson said across America some 222,000 new recruits, among them about 120,000 Soldiers (including Reserve and National Guard applicants) entered military service in 2005. Army applicants comprise one-half of the MEPSs’ total workload, the Navy 23 percent, Air Force 14 percent, Marine Corps 11 percent, and the Coast Guard 2 percent.

The applicants’ first stop after an initial meeting with a recruiter and last stop before shipping out are to one of the Defense Department’s 65 MEPSs located throughout the continental United States, Alaska, Hawaii and Puerto Rico.

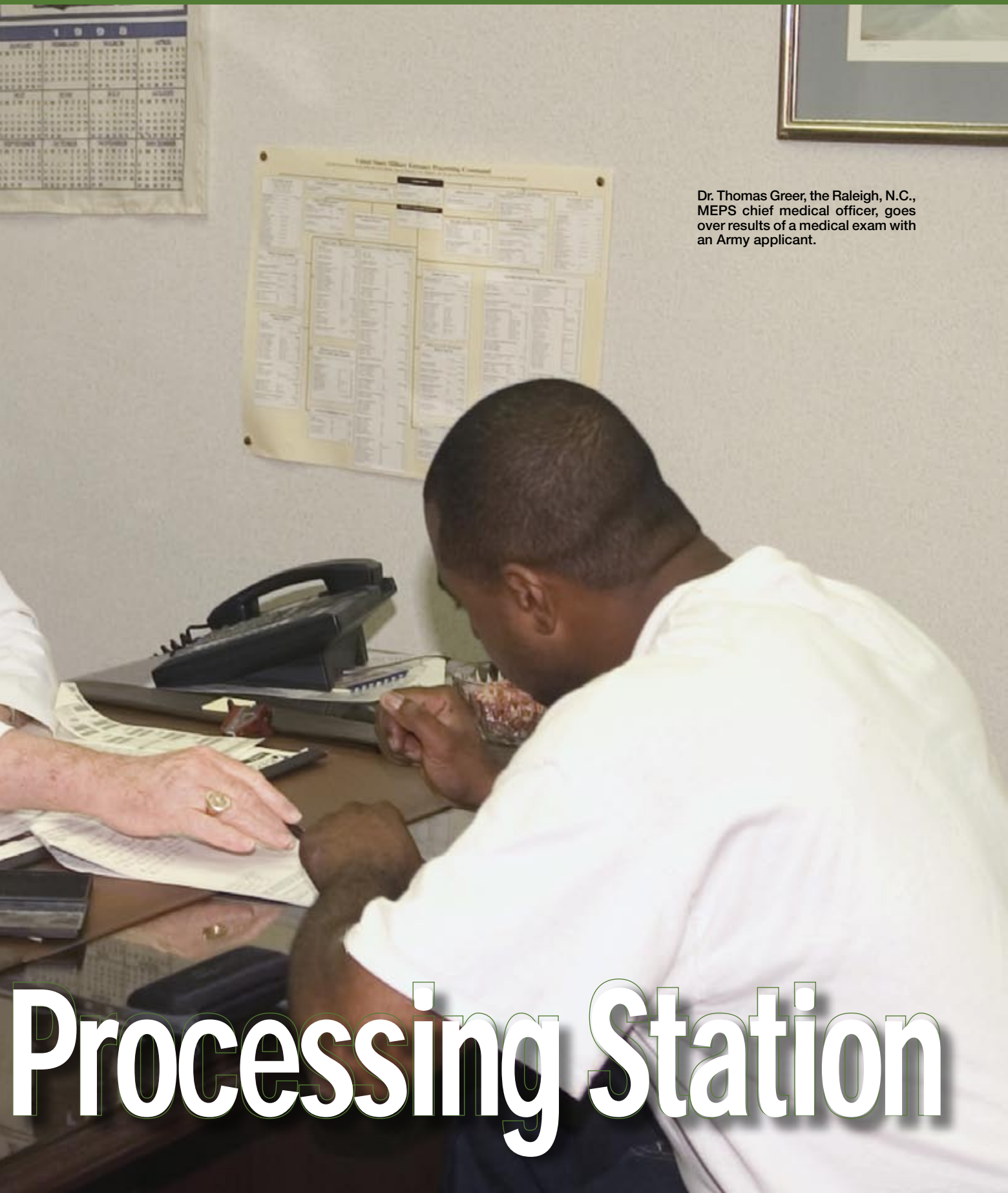
The numbers, Johnson said, don’t track with overall annual service accession figures because the majority of officers and warrant officers do not process through a MEPS.

MEPSs screen applicants, collectively conducting 312,000



# Military Entrance

Story and Photos by Heike Hasenauer



Dr. Thomas Greer, the Raleigh, N.C., MEPS chief medical officer, goes over results of a medical exam with an Army applicant.

# Processing Station



medical exams annually and administering more than 469,000 of the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery tests, plus more than 694,000 student versions of the ASVAB to high school students, Johnson said.

Johnson said most prospective recruits' experiences at the MEPSs quickly eliminates any preconceived notions, possibly given to them by older veterans, of the old and often cold induction centers of the 1970s.

Where the draft-era induction centers worked frantically to ship as many recruits as they could to the respective services, MEPSs physicians make

every attempt to identify physical and mental disabilities that may ultimately cause a recruit to be prematurely discharged from service.

"It's our responsibility to maintain a quality force," said Johnson. "That doesn't mean we try to prevent anyone from serving this country." On the contrary, MEPS personnel work with prospective recruits to remedy shortcomings. Often, a follow-up examination by a specialist or a second try at a hearing test may mean the difference between a "go" and a "no-go."

### In-processing

"In-processing starts here," said Air Force Master Sgt. Elmer Clark, NCOIC of the Raleigh MEPS' Medical Section. "We greet the group,

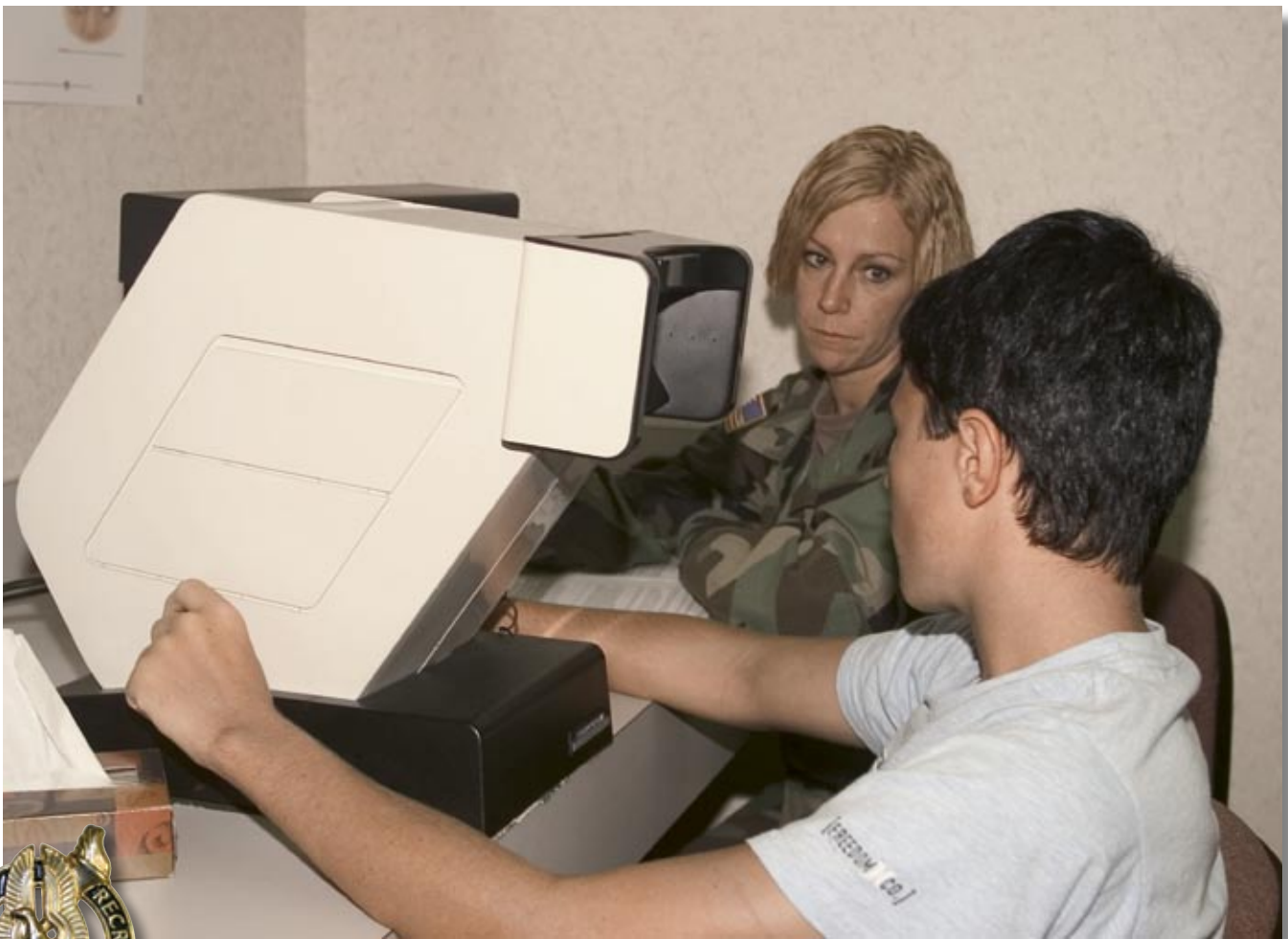
check IDs and tell applicants what to expect during the next five to six hours. They then meet with their respective service-liaison officers."

Some young men and women sign up under the Delayed Entry Program, while others depart for basic training that day. All applicants, however, undergo the required medical tests to qualify for enlistment.

The candidates give blood and urine specimens that are screened for HIV antibodies, THC, cocaine and other drugs.

They also undergo eye and hearing tests, and an all-inclusive physical exam that includes the old cliché, induction-station images of recruits in their underwear squatting, touching their noses and toes, walking back-

▼ The eye exam — here administered by Raleigh MEPS medical technician SGT Sabrina Wright — is given to all potential recruits.



## Military Entrance Processing Station

## Army Personnel by Profession

### Enlisted Soldiers:

Administrative occupations:	15,175	3.7%
Combat specialties	104,876	25.8%
Construction	15,340	3.7%
Electronic/electrical repair	14,035	3.4%
Engineering and technical	63,531	15.6%
Health-care	26,660	6.5%
Human-resource development	16,202	3.9%
Machine operator/precision work	4,528	1.1%
Media, public affairs	4,552	1.1%
Protective services	24,831	6.1%
Support services	13,687	3.3%
Transportation and logistics	54,140	13.3%
Vehicle, machinery mechanics	48,043	11.8%

Total: 405,600

### Officers:

Combat specialties	18,306	24.9%
Engineering and technical	17,368	23.6%
Executive, administrative, managerial	10,139	13.8%
Health-care	9,775	13.3%
Human-resource development	1,369	1.8%
Media and public affairs	177	.24%
Protective services	2,174	2.9%
Support Services	1,500	2.0%
Transportation and logistics	12,612	17.1%

TOTAL: 73,420

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Defense, Defense Manpower Data Center East

MEPS physicians attempt to identify any physical or mental disability that might cause a recruit's premature discharge from the service.

wards and doing jumping jacks, all so the attending physician can detect any bone and muscle deformities.

### The Recruits

Tiquara Olsen Lewis, an attractive 19-year-old who was very much influenced by her family to join the Army, waited anxiously to get this portion of the screening over with.

"The military runs in my family," she said. "My mom, dad, stepdad and both grandfathers are all retired military. And I have a number of friends

in the Army. They're all excited about my enlisting."

Lewis, a 2003 high-school graduate from Newburn, N.C., will be trained by the Army as a metalworker and welder. "I wanted to do something with my hands," she said. "I didn't want to sit behind a desk."

Angela Barnes, 22, a recent graduate of the University of North Carolina, who earned a degree in accounting and business management and worked as an executive for Target, would be taking the oath of enlistment, too.

"I had a great job," said Barnes, who worked and lived in Goldsboro, N.C., "but there was none of the strict regimentation I need. I'll literally be going from my own office to the dirt, but I want to travel. And although I have the option to become an officer, I want to be an enlisted Soldier."

Barnes was to undergo basic training at Fort Jackson, S.C., as an E-4.

➤ Once they've passed all the required examinations at the MEPS, recruits take the oath of enlistment. Most then go immediately to basic training.







◀ As part of their physical exams, potential recruits must provide urine specimens to be tested for the presence of illegal drugs.

Waiting in the men's examining room was Corey Fowler, 20, a construction worker who had been married only a few weeks. He was enlisting to help pay off student loans, he said, and to secure a steady income so he could support his wife and allow her to attend school.

Fowler's dad, a sergeant major at Fort Carson, Colo., was formerly in the 101st Airborne Division, "so he's excited about my going into the Army," said Fowler, who wants to go airborne himself, perhaps as a field medic.

Keith Powell, 24, was an electrician in Williamston, N.C. He has two college degrees, one in electrical systems and another in electronics and industrial systems.

"I'm joining the Army because I think the Army will appreciate what I've learned up to now and will teach me a whole lot more," he said.

Powell's dad — a military policeman in the 1970s who became a civilian cop — had some impact on his decision, the younger Powell said. "I'm pretty sure the fact that the

Army's constantly in the news had something to do with my decision, too."

Powell planned

to enlist for the aviation-electronics career field.

"I thought long and hard about the possibility that I could be sent to Iraq or Afghanistan," he said. "And, you know, I'm ready. If we don't fight terrorists there, we'll fight them in America. Many people don't see the good things the Army is accomplishing over there, but I have a cousin in the Army who's told me about the good things, even after his vehicle hit a roadside bomb and now he has a metal plate in his head."

### Battery of Written Tests

Applicants take the ASVAB test, which includes general geometry problems and visualization and language-skills portions that help officials predict how well an applicant will be able to adapt to a particular job, said 1LT Ori Peer, Army test control officer at the Raleigh MEPS.

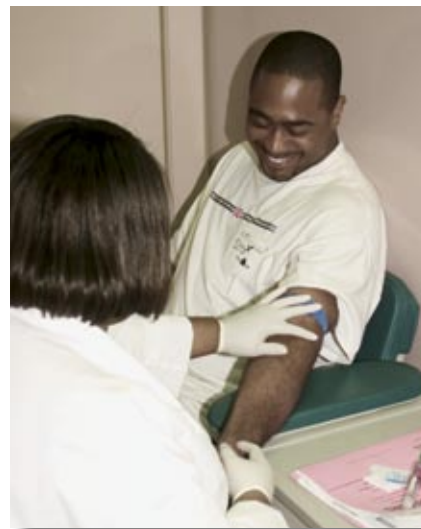
They typically need to score at least 31 on the ASVAB, but periodically an "open-window" period allows the Army to enlist an applicant who is a diploma-holding high school graduate who scores only 26, Peer said. Ninety-nine is the highest possible score.

Other written tests administered at

the MEPS include the English Comprehension Language Test, which is administered to applicants who are going into certain jobs or whose primary language isn't English, as well as to applicants who want to fulfill a much-needed skill — Arabic linguists.

Any of nine other special tests may be administered to an applicant who wants to be considered for a special-skills military occupational specialty. Among those is the Defense Language Proficiency Test, to identify individuals who have an aptitude for foreign languages. And a motivational/personality test is administered to determine each candidate's job-placement preference, said Peer.

Before the day is over, most of the young men and women who arrived early this morning will be new recruits. They'll sign contracts commit-



▲ Blood tests are also a part of the MEPS process for potential recruits. The blood is analyzed on-site in order to rule out the presence of various diseases.



*Military Entrance Processing Station*

ting themselves to anywhere from 15 months to six years of military service, said Christopher Barbee, an Army guidance counselor at the MEPS.

The cash bonus for enlisting for six years — depending on the field an applicant enters — can be as much as \$20,000, said Barbee, who validates all the information an applicant provides, including education and work history and any criminal background.

### Career Counseling

“I try to assess what they need to do, based on what they tell me,” Barbee said. “I show them the minimum number of years they can enlist as a medical specialist, for example, for various incentives. And, I ask them, ‘What do you want to achieve during the years of your enlistment?’”

Barbee said young people often enlist for the G.I. Bill and College Fund — the latter viable up to 10 years from the day a Soldier gets out of the Army.

“I love my job,” added Council. “The Army served me well. And I know what it can do for other people. When a parent comes to the MEPS with a child, the parent wants to understand what the child will be doing. They wouldn’t be here if they weren’t supportive.”


Susan Denny came on this day to witness the induction of her son, Korey. Korey’s father and grandmother were also at the event.

“Korey, who’s 19, was attending Appalachian State University in Boone, N.C.,” Susan said, without any further explanation. “This will be really good for him. Why? That’s a long story; it’ll just be good for him.” 📌

➤ Army guidance counselor Christopher Barbee discusses enlistment options with an Army applicant. Counselors can help potential recruits fine-tune their career plans.







# Citizenship Ceremony Downrange

Story by SSG Mark St. Clair

**O**NE hundred forty-three candidates from 42 countries held up their right hands during an Army and U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services-led ceremony in the Al-Faw Palace rotunda near Camp Victory, Iraq.

The oath of citizenship of the United States includes the words "... that I will perform noncombatant service in the armed forces of the United States of America when required by law."

"Before they were its citizens they were willing to fight for it, risk everything for it and spend a portion of their lives away from a country that they're dedicated to," said LTG John R. Vines, commander of Multinational Corps, Iraq, and presiding officer during the ceremony.

Hawaii Army National Guard SPC Richard Soriano started filing for citizenship a year earlier. The 23-year-old infantryman, then halfway through a

year-long deployment with 2nd Battalion, 299th Infantry Regiment, left a brother in the Philippines — and his parents, five more brothers and a sister in Maui — when he came to Camp Victory.

"It feels great," he said of his new citizenship. "I called my family the other day, and they were very proud."

Another new American, Nicaraguan native PFC Pablo Perez, traveled from Mosul, Iraq, to participate. A member of the 25th Brigade Support Bn., Perez had been trying to obtain citizenship for five years.

"I think the ceremony is outstanding," he said. "I think every Soldier here feels like they're being taken care of by the military. It's a good thing for us."

More than half of the new citizens joined the military after Sept. 11, 2001, Vines said, and knew exactly what they were risking when they agreed to serve.

"They're so committed to the concepts of democracy and freedom


SSG Mark St. Clair is assigned to the Multinational Corps, Iraq, Public Affairs Office.



that they're sacrificing much of their own to ensure that America remains free," he said.

After the remarks by Vines and presiding USCIS officer Karen Landsness, participants heard a recorded message from President George W. Bush. Then Perez, Soriano and 141

of their newly naturalized brothers- and sisters-in-arms were given certificates of citizenship by Vines and Landsness.

"We're in the presence of some great young men and women who are about to receive a title that is among the most desired titles in history: American Citizen," Vines said. 

## Citizenship for Soldiers

**M**EMBERS of any of the U.S. armed services, including selected members of the Individual Ready Reserve, may apply for citizenship under special provisions of the Immigration and Nationality Act.

Recent changes in Sections 328 and 329 of the INA make it easier for qualified military personnel to become U.S. citizens. Additionally, the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) has created a streamlined process specifically for military personnel serving on active-duty or who have been recently discharged.

As of Oct. 1, 2004, service members do not pay a fee when filing for citizenship.

### Qualifications

A military service member must meet certain requirements and qualifications to become a U.S. citizen. These include demonstrating:

- Good moral character;
- Knowledge of the English language;
- Knowledge of U.S. government and history; and
- Attachment to the United States by taking an oath of allegiance to the U.S. Constitution.

Military service members are exempt from other naturalization requirements outlined in the INA, as amended by the National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 2004, which President George W. Bush signed in November 2003. Title XVII of the act ("Naturalization and Other Immigration Benefits for Military Personnel and Families") contains five sections that pertain to naturalization requirements and benefits for members of the U.S. armed forces.

Section 1701 ("Requirements for Naturalization Through Service in the United States Armed Forces") includes the following criteria:


- A service member needs to serve only one year on active duty to qualify for citizenship. Before this change, the requirement was three years.
- A service member filing an application for citizenship is not charged a fee.
- A service member dishonorably discharged before completing five years of service may have the citizenship revoked.
- The secretaries of homeland security, state and defense will ensure that all aspects of the naturalization process — including citizenship applications, interviews, oaths and ceremonies — are made available overseas through U.S. embassies, consulates and U.S. military installations.

Sections 1702, 1703 and 1704 contain information including: "Naturalization benefits for members of the Selected Reserve of the Ready Reserve;" "Extension of posthumous benefits to surviving spouses, children and parents;" and "Expedited process for granting posthumous citizenship to members of the armed services."

*(Continued on page 46)*







(Continued from page 45)

# The Fast Track to Citizenship

**O**n July 3, 2002, President George W. Bush signed the “Expedited Naturalization Executive Order” calling for the expedited naturalization of aliens and noncitizens serving on active duty in the U.S. armed forces during the war on terrorism.

The order allows active-duty personnel serving on or after Sept. 11, 2001, to immediately file for citizenship. Normally, a military service member would have to complete one year of honorable service before qualifying to file for citizenship. Section 329 of the INA authorizes the president to waive this requirement during periods of military hostilities.

Every military installation has a designated point of contact to handle military naturalization applications. Military service members should use this contact to help file a complete naturalization application packet. That package will include the forms titled:

- Application for Naturalization (USCIS Form N-400)
- Request for Certification of Military or Naval Service (USCIS Form N-426), and
- Biographic Information (USCIS Form G-325B).

The complete package is then sent to the USCIS Nebraska Service Center for expedited processing.

The INA allows for the awarding of posthumous citizenship to active-duty military personnel who die while serving in the U.S. armed forces. In addition, surviving family members seeking immigration benefits are given special consideration. To learn more, contact your military legal office or the local district USCIS office.

Since Bush signed the Expedited Naturalization Executive Order, USCIS has naturalized nearly 20,000 service members. In all, more than 33,000 service members have filed for expedited naturalization.

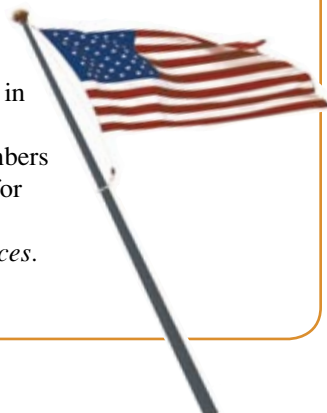
During fiscal year 2005 more than 3,300 service members became U.S. citizens. During FY 2004 more than 7,500 service members became citizens.

In October 2004 USCIS began hosting the first overseas military naturalization ceremonies since the Korean War. During those ceremonies, and since, 523 service members have become citizens while serving on active duty outside of the United States.

To date, USCIS has granted posthumous citizenship to 59 service members who served in the war on terror.

There are currently more than 40,000 members of the U.S. military who are eligible to apply for naturalization.

— *U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services.*





# Downrange **Re-enlistment**

**W**HEN 210 Soldiers of the Alaska-based 172nd Stryker Brigade Combat Team recently deployed to Kuwait, they all asked to re-enlist as a group. Their leaders accommodated them by holding a mass re-enlistment ceremony at Camp Buehring, Kuwait, before the unit moved north into Iraq.

"This was truly a great morning," said COL Michael Shields, the 172nd SBCT's commander. "This whole group represents a great generation. They are patriots and it is extremely humbling."

"There could have been a ceremony behind closed doors, but they wanted something different," said CSM Joe Ulibari. "This is a close group, and they wanted to do this together."

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SPC Michael R. Noggle is with the 11th Public Affairs Detachment.

"It was a great day for Soldiers to go out and support this unit," said SGT Bradley R. Sage of 2nd Battalion, 1st Infantry Regiment. "This is something that everyone will be happy they were a part of."

Of the 210 Soldiers, more than half are staying with the brigade after the deployment, while the rest will move to other units.

"It is a good sign of things to come," Ulibari said. "Some are without combat experience, some have been here before. They're making the decision to stay in the Army and this unit, knowing there is a good possibility they will be back in Iraq again."

"The Army has done a lot for me, so I wanted to be able to stay in for a career," Sage said. "It's the best thing that happened in my life and I wouldn't give it up for anything."

*"There could have been a ceremony behind closed doors, but they wanted something different."*



# This Is Our Army 2006

*SOLDIERS is proud to present This Is Our Army 2006 — a pictorial record of the world's greatest Army supporting the nation in the global war on terrorism.*

*The photographers who share these images from the past year have captured for posterity what it means to be a Soldier. The Soldiers, family members and civilians who are the Army have great stories to tell — stories of service to the nation in Iraq, Afghanistan and elsewhere; of sweating through tough training; of facing tense moments while maintaining peace or bringing humanitarian aid to the victims of natural disasters at home and abroad; of managing the infinite complexities of running an Army community and of raising Army families.*

*We thank all who took the time to find and tell these stories in pictures, and allow us a glimpse into the daily lives of the men and women who are America's Army. We here at SOLDIERS are proud to tell their stories.*

*Gil High*  
Editor in Chief



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- 1 SFC Mark Gallegos of Co. C, 1st Bn., 24th Inf. Regt., points to the house his squad will enter during operations in Mosul, Iraq. — SGT Jeremiah Johnson
- 2 CPT Steve Lindsay of the 1st Cav. Div. adjusts a young boy's prosthetic leg at Camp Union, Iraq. — SSG Susan German
- 3 Soldiers of the 6015th Garrison Support Unit lower the flag before a winter storm hits Fort McCoy, Wis. — Rob Schuette
- 4 Members of the 344th Medical Task Force from Fort Totten, N.Y., walk toward the plane that will carry them to a year's duty in Iraq. — Loni C. Witscheber



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- 1 SPC Maria L. Hemminger, a student in a PLDC class at Fort McCoy, prepares to engage the "enemy" with an M-249 squad automatic weapon. — Lou Ann M. Mittelstaedt
- 2 Soldiers of the 344th MTF react to a simulated ambush during predeployment training at Fort McCoy. — Loni C. Witscheber
- 3 A PLDC student advances through covering smoke during training at Fort McCoy. — Lou Ann M. Mittelstaedt
- 4 Students in the Army Reserve's 10th Div. (IT) Drill Sergeants School cross a log obstacle. — Rob Schuette
- 5 Members of the 652nd Engr. Co. deploy a bridge section at Alderwood Lake, Wis. — Rob Schuette



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6 Family and friends look on as members of various Iraq-bound Wisconsin National Guard units depart for Camp Shelby, Miss., for predeployment training. — Loni C. Witscheber

7 PLDC students at Fort McCoy's NCO Academy listen to instructions before a simulated tactical operation. — Lou Ann M. Mittelstaedt

8 Army Reserve Soldiers learn proper personnel-search techniques during training at Fort McCoy. — Rob Schuette

9 Iraq-bound Soldiers practice self-defense moves under the guidance of corrections specialist SFC Danny Reid during a detainee operations course at Fort McCoy. — Loni C. Witscheber



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- 1 Two girls dress the part during an historical re-enactment on the grounds of the former Dragoon Camp at Fort Leavenworth, Kan. — Prudence Siebert
- 2 CPT Sam Donnelly of the 2nd Bn., 7th Inf. Regt., hands out diplomas during a grade-school graduation ceremony in Tikrit, Iraq. — Senior MSGt. Kim M. Allain, USAF
- 3 SGT Leisa Walker, a medic with 2nd Bn., 22nd Inf., takes a young Iraqi patient's vital signs before sending him to see a doctor during a medical aid mission. — SSG Kevin L. Moses
- 4 A Stryker vehicle slows for ducks in Mosul, Iraq. — SPC David J. Nunn



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5 Iraqi troops and Soldiers of the 15th Inf. Regt. move in to sweep an Iraqi village at dawn. — Senior MSgt. Kim M. Allain, USAF

6 A 3rd Inf. Div. Soldier stands guard atop his Bradley near an Iraqi army checkpoint in Tikrit, Iraq. — SGT Matthew Acosta

7 Other 3rd ID Soldiers prepare to inspect vehicles lined up at the same Tikrit checkpoint. — SGT Matthew Acosta

8 Army Vice Chief of Staff GEN Richard A. Cody swears in recruits during an on-field ceremony before a pro basketball game in Chicago. — SSG Rebecca Critser



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This is Our Army





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- 1 SPC Elizabeth Ferguson of the 224th Engr. Bn. works on a window at a school in Los Higos, Panama, during Exercise New Horizons 2005. — Kaye Richey
- 2 Soldiers of the Texas Army Guard's 3rd Bn., 141st Inf. Regt., provide security for a CH-47 Chinook helicopter during an operation near Bagram, Afghanistan. — SPC Harold Fields
- 3 Members of the 2nd Bn., 7th Inf. Regt., use bridge-erection boats to patrol the Tigris River near Samarra, Iraq. — SSG Eddie L. Bradley
- 4 During a humanitarian-aid mission, Alaska Army National Guard Soldiers assemble a swing set for children living in Al Hillah, Iraq. — SGT Arthur Hamilton

5 SSG Shelly Shurtleff of the 993rd Med. Det. medicates a horse in La Mesa, Panama, during Exercise New Horizons 05. — Kaye Richey

6 Carpenters from the 20th Engr. Bde. erect a wall for a maintenance bay they're building at Camp Victory, Iraq. — SGT Michael J. Carden

7 After providing aerial security for a ground search operation, an AH-64 Apache attack helicopter prepares for a sunset landing at Camp Taji, Iraq. — Tech. Sgt. Russell E. Cooley IV, USAF

8 Amputee SFC Michael McNaughton prepares to run a New Mexico marathon honoring victims of the World War II Bataan Death March. — Ted Gaskins



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1 A U.S. Soldier on humanitarian-relief duty consoles Kim Keah-weol after Typhoon Maemi devastated her South Korean village. — SGT Lisa Jendry

2 Joe Nemecek's Army Chevy leads the Navy Dodge during the Sheetrock 400 NASCAR race in Chicago. — Cameras in Action

3 Iraqi troops and Soldiers of 1st Bn., 327th Inf. Regt., walk through a village after a joint patrol. — Tech. Sgt. Andy Dunaway, USAF

4 Soldiers from the Alaska-based 864th Engineer Bn. work on a section of road between Kandahar and Tarin Kowt, Afghanistan. — 1LT Laura Walker

5 SGT Christopher Gonzalez of the 3rd Inf. Div. loads radio frequencies into the communications system of his Bradley fighting vehicle before a mission in Baqubah, Iraq. — Prudence Siebert



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6 Paratroopers of the 82nd Abn. Div. conduct training before a jump at Pope Air Force Base, N.C. — Staff Sgt. Jacob N. Bailey, USAF

7 Artillerymen of the Hawaii-based 25th Inf. Div. position their M-119 howitzer near Forward Operating Base Cobra, Afghanistan. — SPC Jerry T. Combes

8 Soldiers of the 1st Armd. Div. kick open a door while conducting a search in Mushada, Iraq. — Tech. Sgt. Russel E. Cooley IV, USAF

9 SPC Jennifer Raszynski listens to two new friends at an orphanage in Herat, Afghanistan. — Sgt. Jeremy A. Clawson



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- 1 CPL Jerry Rogers of Scout Platoon, 1st Bn., 13th Armd. Regt., prepares to launch a small unmanned aerial vehicle near Taji, Iraq. — Tech. Sgt. Russell E. Cooley IV, USAF
- 2 SPC Dredatis Cook of 1st Bn., 156th Armd. Regt., tightens a bolt on an M1A1 Abrams main battle tank. — SPC Ricardo J. Branch
- 3 Fort A.P. Hill, Va., firefighter Brad Thomas uses a drip torch to light brush along the edge of a road during a prescribed burn. — Mary Bodine
- 4 SSGs Lean Grandchamp and Chris Thomas of Fort Leavenworth, Kan., talk with a resident of a local Department of Veterans Affairs nursing home. — Prudence Siebert

5 SGT Samuel Southerland uses his rucksack as a flotation aid during water survival training at Fort Leavenworth. — Prudence Siebert

6 Cadets from the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, N.Y., lead the funeral procession for retired GEN William Westmoreland. — SSG Larry Garner

7 Iraqis look on as a security patrol from the 10th Mountain Div. rolls through Baghdad's Ghazaliyah neighborhood on election day, Dec. 15. — SFC Kenneth Walker

8 SSG Matthew Sheppard of 1st Bn., 325th Inf. Regt., carries airdropped supplies on a donkey near Lwar Kowndalan, Afghanistan. — SPC Mike Pryor



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- 1 At Camp Taji, Iraq, SPC Alejandro Guevara of the 223rd Maintenance Co. cuts steel for use in the bed of a truck. — SGT David Foley
- 2 An MLRS rocket lifts off during a test firing by 3rd Bn., 13th Field Artillery. — SPC Gul A. Alisan
- 3 Soldiers of the 11th Signal Detachment practice their marksmanship at Coleman Barracks in Mannheim, Germany. — Keith Wright
- 4 SPC Christopher Adams of the 9th Area Medical Laboratory prepares samples during training at Brooks City Base, Texas. — Jim Murray
- 5 Dr. (CPT) Jennifer Rael of the 3rd Armd. Cav. Regt. checks a child in Yusafiyah, Iraq. — PFC Ferdinand Thomas



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6 PV2 Leal Williams of the 253rd Engr. Bn. levels the wall of a structure under construction at Karski-Khanabad Air Base, Uzbekistan. — Tech. Sgt. Scott T. Sturkol, USAF

7 A UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter of the 173rd Abn. Bde. lifts off on a medical-evacuation mission from Baghdad. — CPT Jay Delarosa

8 Aboard the International Space Station, retired Army COL Bill McArthur shows who he supports in the upcoming Army-Navy game. — NASA

9 Soldiers of the Arkansas Army National Guard march in review during a welcome-home ceremony following their return from overseas. — MSG Robert Carr



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This is Our Army





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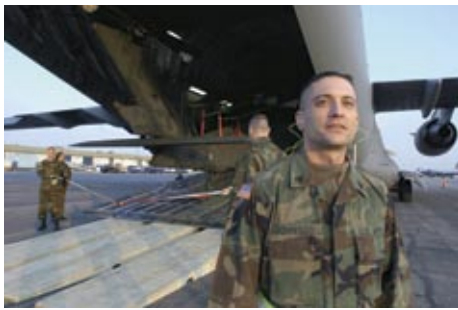
1 SPC Brandon Ashley stands watch near a forward operating base in Iraq. — PHC Edward G. Martens, USN

2 COL Kevin Owens of the 173rd Abn. Bde. meets with Afghan leaders in a village in Kandahar Province. — PFC Vincent Fusco

3 Female Soldiers help Iraqi women during a physical-fitness screening for potential members of the Iraqi police in Iskandariyah.— PHC Edward G. Martens, USN

4 Retired COL Elmer Jones, a former Tuskegee Airman, looks at a Pentagon display about the famed World War II black fighter pilots. — MSgt. James M Bowman, USAF

5 During an award ceremony at Camp Liberty, Iraq, SGT Leigh Ann Hester stands at attention before receiving the Silver Star for heroism in combat. — Prudence Siebert



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6 SGT Dennis Johnson supervises the loading of a UH-60 into a C-141 at Indianapolis International Airport. — SGT Les Newport

7 An Army Humvee moves through flooded New Orleans immediately after Hurricane Katrina — SSG Jacob N. Bailey

8 BG Coral Pietsch, first female general in the Judge Advocate General corps, stands before an exhibit about her career at the U.S. Army Women's Museum. — Travis Edwards

9 Members of the U.S. Army Chorus prepare to perform during a Washington, D.C., luncheon honoring Medal of Honor recipients. — MSgt. Jim Varhegyi, USAF



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1 Members of the Joint POW/MIA Accountability Command lift a Zodiac boat during training at Hickam Air Force Base, Hawaii. — SSG Derrick C. Goode

2 A Soldier leans from his M-113 armored personnel carrier to hand an MRE meal to an Iraqi boy. — Tech. Sgt. Russell E. Cooley IV, USAF

3 Members of the 212th Mobile Army Surgical Hospital prepare a Pakistani earthquake victim for transport. — Airman 1st Class Barry Loo, USAF

4 Military police Soldiers practice unarmed combat techniques during training at Fort Leavenworth. — Prudence Siebert



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# U.S. Army All-American Bowl

Story by Rich Lamance

**A**MERICA'S top high-school athletes shared center stage with America's top Soldiers during the 2006 U.S. Army All-American Bowl at the Alamodome in San Antonio, Texas, Jan. 7.

High-school players from the East battled those from the West before a national television audience and in front of 31,565 fans, the largest in the Army's six-year history of hosting the event. The East won, 27-16.

During pre-game activities, 78 Soldiers — all of whom were awarded either the Distinguished Service Medal, Silver Star, Bronze Star or Purple Heart — were introduced to the audience, along with the nation's top 78 high-school football players.

Soldiers attending advanced individual training at Fort Sam Houston, Texas, marched onto the field to recite the Soldier's Creed, and the U.S. Army Field Band provided a musical salute.

"The Army sponsors the game to enhance its connection with America's young people and to recognize excellence demonstrated by them," said COL Garrie Dornan, director of the Army's Community Relations and Outreach Division.

Athletes who played in the game share many of the characteristics that make Soldiers strong, he added, including leadership, teamwork, commitment to excellence and a desire to make a difference as members of a team.

"The Army All-American Bowl is the largest Army-sponsored event in America," Dornan said. "It's a fitting way for all Americans to come together to celebrate

achievements of our young people, while paying tribute to the thousands of Soldiers who followed their 'call of duty' to serve our nation."

Some 100 Delayed-Entry Program recruits were given the oath of enlistment by Army Vice Chief of Staff GEN Richard A. Cody during a pre-game ceremony. Two ROTC graduates were also commissioned by GEN William Wallace, commander of U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command. Four Soldiers from the 101st Airborne Division capped the pre-game ceremony by rappelling from the rafters of the Alamodome to present the game ball to players.

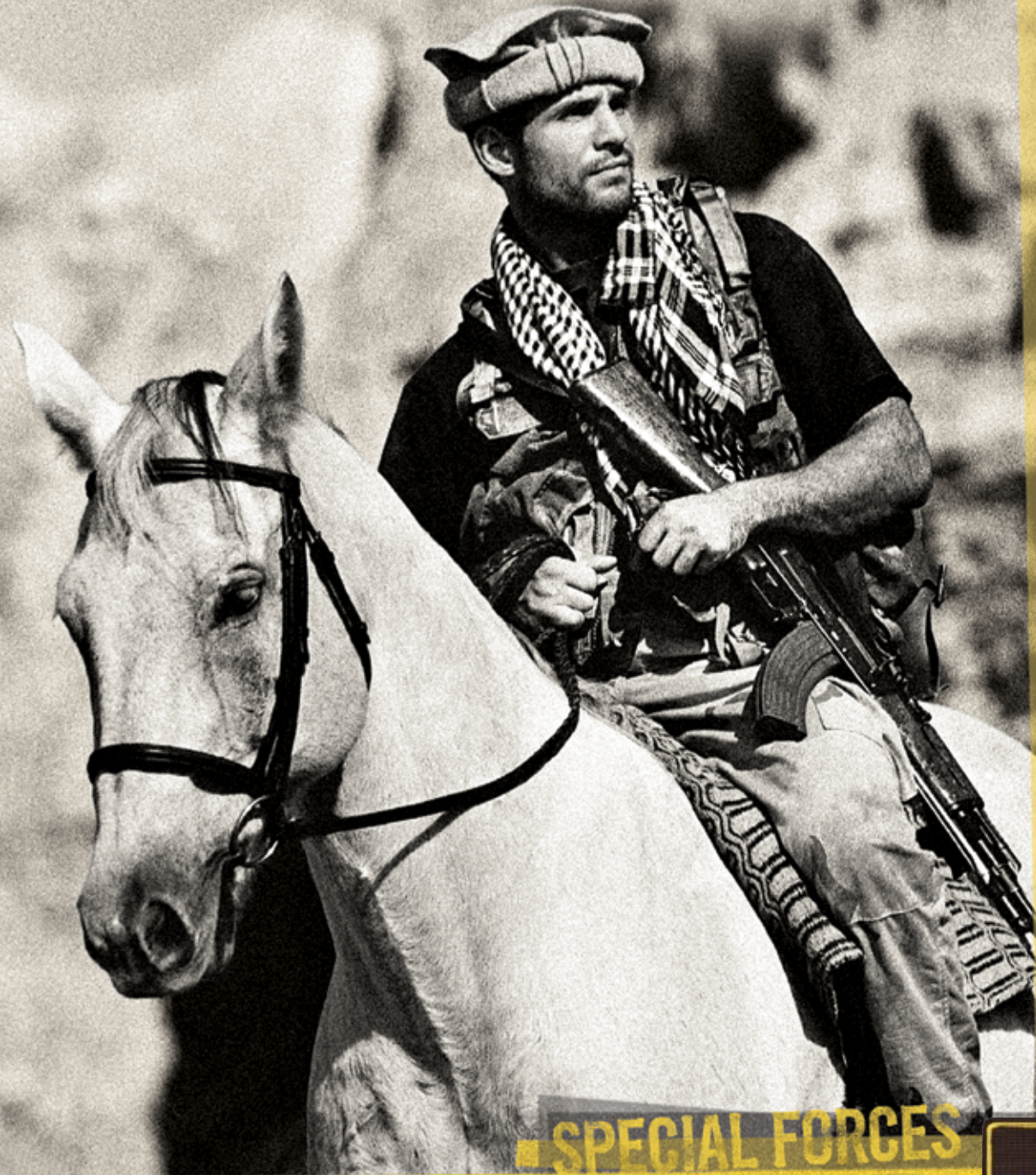
Army Reserve SGT Chris J. Neiweem of the 814th Military Police Company in Arlington Heights, Ill., believes the messages he and fellow Soldiers articulate during the week are important ones.

"This is a celebration of courage from several angles. We have young athletes who represent the best in the country, and we have Soldiers who have put their lives on the line for their country representing the best of the Army," Neiweem said. "It's fitting having this contest in the city that represents the fighting spirit of those who fought in the Alamo. Both sides represent leadership and are role models to our communities and nation as a whole." 🇺🇸

**For more news on the All-American Bowl, photos of the event and links to the event's official Web site, go to [www.army.mil/2006allamericanbowl](http://www.army.mil/2006allamericanbowl).**



# GREEN BERETS DON'T ALWAYS WEAR GREEN BERETS.



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AN ARMY OF ONE

## SPECIAL FORCES

Part of being a Special Forces warrior is gaining people's trust. To do that, my team and I learn their customs. Their language. And sometimes we even adopt their way of dress. We're engineering specialists, medical specialists, weapons and communications specialists, and our understanding of foreign cultures is as important as our other skills. We are **AN ARMY OF ONE**. And our mission is clear.

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# **HOT** **TOPICS**

February 2006

Volume 8, No. 1

CURRENT ISSUES FOR ARMY LEADERS

## **Choose Your Goal**

**Let Army Education Help You Reach It**

**Lifetime of Learning**  
***In the Classroom or Online***  
**Scholarship Opportunities**



THE world we are living in and the Army we serve is changing at a very rapid pace. Education is a powerful enabler allowing the Army to maintain its position as the predominant Army in the world. It prepares Soldiers for the future, allows them to better deal with today's challenges, and provides them with skills to maintain a competitive edge.

The Army Continuing Education System ensures lifelong learning opportunities are available and affordable to Soldiers around the world. ACES counselors are trained to help Soldiers establish a plan to attain their education goals, using a wide variety of resources.

As the Army transforms and more services become Web-enabled, ACES will make it easier for Soldiers to continue their educations through implementation of more virtualized education operations to benefit and support Soldiers around the globe.

Beyond enhancing mission readiness, education can improve Soldiers' chances for promotion and their marketability for civilian jobs after retirement. An education is something Soldiers carry with them, regardless of where they go. Knowledge is a powerful asset that improves critical thinking and decision-making skills. It enhances awareness of the world.

One of the most important virtues a leader can pass on to Soldiers is an appreciation for knowledge. I hope this issue of Hot Topics will encourage leaders and their Soldiers to continue learning. ACES professionals stand ready to assist.

BG E. Eric Porter  
The Adjutant General of the Army



**Hot Topics — Current Issues for Army Leaders** is a U.S. Army publication produced by the Office of the Chief of Public Affairs. Our purpose is to guide and inform Army leaders and trainers in discussing current or controversial topics. A contract printer distributes **Hot Topics** as an insert to **Soldiers magazine**. **Hot Topics** is in the public domain (except for "by permission" and copyright items) and may be reproduced locally without obtaining further permission.

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Editor in Chief	GIL HIGH
Special Products Editor	DON WAGNER
Creative Design and Production	IMAGE MEDIA SERVICES, INC., McLean, Va.
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THIS issue of Hot Topics gives Soldiers a snapshot look at the educational opportunities available to them.

Soldiers who walk through their local education offices are the Army's leaders of tomorrow. They have the ability to adapt quickly to the hostile, changing environment of the battlefield. A thinking mind finds the answers.

*"The Army remains committed to the education of our leaders even during this period of war. In fact, we are more aggressively pursuing leaders' education now than during any other period of conflict in our history. We are educating our leaders to expand their minds, increase their cultural awareness and to promote a "lifetime of learning."*

(Posture Statement 2005 U.S. Army)





# Continuing Education... What's in It for You?

EARNING a degree? Why bother? Earning a degree takes time and money. Soldiers and veterans can save both with an official transcript from the Army/American Council on Education Registry Transcript System, or AARTS.

AARTS transcripts translate military education and job experience into civilian language by listing college-equivalent credit recommendations that assist colleges and universities in credentialing Soldiers' experience and knowledge. AARTS transcripts are free and available to qualifying Soldiers and veterans of the regular Army, Army National Guard, and Army Reserve. Qualifications are detailed online at <http://aarts.army.mil>.

Requests are processed and mailed when they are received by the next work day to academic institutions, Soldiers, education counselors and employers around the world.

Soldiers and veterans may view and print their transcripts from our Web site at <https://aartstranscript.army.mil/>. Online ordering of transcripts for over 750 colleges is available at <https://aartstranscript.army.mil/>. The transcript request form is available online at <http://aarts.army.mil/Order.htm>. Requests may be faxed to (913) 648-2011

or (DSN) 552-2011, or mailed to: AARTS Operations Center, 415 McPherson Ave., Fort Leavenworth, KS 66027-1373.

E-mail requests for personal AARTS transcript copies are also accepted at [aarts@leavenworth.army.mil](mailto:aarts@leavenworth.army.mil). For those not using the order form, the Web site provides necessary information needed to request a transcript.

After checking the AARTS Web site and reviewing their transcripts, Soldiers who have questions may call the AARTS Operations Center at (913) 684-3269, (DSN) 552-3269 or toll free (866) 297-4427.

Education is an American value. Education is an integral part of the Army culture. It sharpens Soldiers' competitive edge and hones critical-thinking skills.

- Lifelong learning is for everyone.
- Education enhances quality of life and mission readiness.
- Education programs and services are customer-driven.
- Career professionals are vital to the Army mission.
- Professional development is non-negotiable in today's workforce.

**Our Army at War — Relevant and Ready-Today and Tomorrow  
Educated Soldier Today, Military Leader Tomorrow**



# What Does ACES Do for You?

THE Army is operating in a high-tech, fast-flowing environment and needs Soldiers to be multi-skilled.

The Army Continuing Education System delivers a full range of learning programs that help Soldiers meet educational and professional goals. Whether Soldiers seek college degrees, technical training, or just want to brush up on math or English skills, ACES has 113 Army education centers, supported by 139 multi-use learning facilities and a staff of professional educators, to get them started. Programs and services include:

- Academic and vocational counseling,
- Basic Skills Program (called Functional Academic Skills Training, or FAST),
- High school completion,
- English as a Second Language, or ESL,
- Postsecondary programs,
- Tuition assistance, testing,
- AARTS,
- Leader skills enhancement courses, GI to Jobs,
- Service Members Opportunity Colleges Army Degrees, or SOCAD
- eArmyU.

## THE Army's Continuing Education System

THE Army Continuing Education System promotes lifelong learning opportunities with the goal of sharpening the Army's competitive edge. The ACES provides quality self-development programs and services from 113 Army education centers around the globe.

Several resources are available to support you:

- Army Continuing Education System or ACES counselors. ACES counselors assist Soldiers in identifying education goals, provide counseling on tuition assistance and Army education policies and procedures, and initiate eArmyU enrollment.
- Program mentors. Soldiers who are enrolled in eArmyU are supported by a program mentor who works with with ACES counselors who provide academic advice and support. Mentors assist with administrative issues, and encourage students to use Web-based support services that help Soldiers accomplish their educational goals.
- Campus contacts. Campus points of contact provide information relating to aspects of student enrollment at particular colleges or universities, such as: degree programs, admissions requirements, course policies and access, or course instructors.



# GI to Jobs: A COOL Deal for Soldiers



THE GI to Jobs initiative helps Soldiers identify and earn civilian credentials that will benefit them in their military careers and when they seek civilian employment. Certificates or licenses provide Soldiers with professional-development opportunities and are valuable to have when making that step into America's job force.

Some 94 percent of the Army's Military Occupational Specialties, or MOS's match civilian jobs that are subject to licensure or certification, and 93 percent of enlisted Soldiers serve in these MOSs.

In 2002 the Army Continuing Education System launched its GI to Jobs Web site, called "Credentialing Opportunities On-Line," at [www.cool.army.mil](http://www.cool.army.mil). Known as COOL, the site contains extensive information on civilian credentialing and explains how enlisted Soldiers can meet civilian credentialing requirements related to their MOSs. A "credential" can be a license or a certification:

- Licenses are granted by federal, state or local governmental agencies. Licenses are typically

mandatory, as state and federal laws or regulations define the occupational standards.

- Certifications are usually granted by nongovernmental agencies, associations and private-sector companies and are often optional. Certification standards may be set by professional associations or by industry.

Since many civilian professions require credentials, Soldiers need to understand the role credentialing plays in their fields. COOL can help. Soldiers should use COOL to:

- Get background information about civilian licensure and certification,
- Search by Army MOS to identify relevant licenses and certifications,
- Learn how to fill gaps between Army training and experience and civilian credentialing requirements,
- Learn about resources that can help Soldiers gain civilian job credentials.



## GI to Jobs: A COOL Deal for Soldiers

NEW users of the COOL Web site can review the COOL “Overview and Credentialing Basics” to understand how to get the most out of COOL and learn about civilian credentialing. The “Costs and Resources” page outlines potential credentialing costs and the resources available to Soldiers to help defray costs. Or, users can go directly to the “Credential Search” page.

After searching for an MOS using the Credential Search page, Soldiers are presented with information, including the names of civilian jobs that are similar to the selected MOS, along with links to the **Occupational Outlook Handbook’s** job descriptions. Requirements for national certification and state licensure follow. Next to each listing is a rating icon that reveals the estimated ability of a first-term Soldier to obtain that particular credential. By clicking on each credential, viewers can see the gaps between Army training and experience and civilian certification requirements.

Credentialing boards may require different types of documentation. Some credentialing boards are familiar with military documentation and have explicit requirements for military documentation of education, training and experience. If the credentialing board is not familiar with or has questions related to your military training or experience inform them about the types of documentation that you have or can obtain. They may be more willing to consider your training and experience if they are aware of these official documents.

The Army provides three types of education, training and experience documentation — a military transcript and two official military forms:

- Army American Council of Education Registry Transcript System, or AARTS,
- Verification of Military Experience and Training (DD Form 2586),
- Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty (DD Form 214).







IN 2001 the Army launched eArmyU, a computer-based program designed to offer eligible enlisted Soldiers the opportunity to work toward a college degree or certificate. eArmyU is available Army-wide, regardless of duty station.

Two eArmyU enrollment options are available to all regular Army active-duty enlisted Soldiers, Active Guard Reserve Soldiers, mobilized Reservists, and officers who have computer access. They are, eCourses enrollment or course-by-course enrollment.

The eArmyU technology package (laptop) enrollment is available to most regular Army active-duty enlisted Soldiers in the ranks of E-3 to E-9 who meet specific eligibility criteria and the three-year-service-remaining requirement. Both eCourse and laptop program enrollees receive several tools to support their success as online students, including 100 percent tuition, up to the established semester-hour cap and annual tuition ceiling. eArmyU tuition includes textbooks, an Internet service provider account, eArmyU "Boot Camp" tutorial, and 24/7 helpdesk and technology support.

Laptop program enrollees receive a laptop computer that the Soldier keeps after completing 12 semester hours of eArmyU coursework. eArmyU.com, the program's distance-learning portal, allows enrolled Soldiers to access more than 147 postsecondary certificates, associate's, bachelor's and master's degree programs from 29 regionally accredited college and university partners.

Soldiers can transfer education credits among member institutions, because only Servicemembers Opportunity Colleges Army Degree, or SOCAD member schools offer undergraduate programs as part of eArmyU.

Institutions offering graduate and/or certificate programs must agree in writing to the Servicemembers Opportunity Colleges, or SOC institutional principles and criteria. If you are ready to get started on your education, contact an ACES counselor or visit [www.eArmyU.com](http://www.eArmyU.com) to assess your enrollment eligibility. Contact an ACES counselor or visit [www.eArmyU.com](http://www.eArmyU.com) to assess your enrollment eligibility.

- ❶ **Unique:** eArmyU provides up to 100 percent funding for tuition, books, course fees, e-mail and Internet access. Eligible Soldiers also may receive personal laptop computers or enroll in the eCourse option.
- ❷ **Flexible:** e-learning programs, guaranteed course and credit transferability and Internet access enable Soldiers to stay on track and earn their degrees anytime, anywhere.
- ❸ **Committed:** 24/7 helpdesk support and program mentors are available to help every Soldier succeed in earning his degree.
- ❹ **Efficient:** eArmyU enables Soldiers to take courses from 29 regionally-accredited colleges and universities through one integrated online program, which eliminates the need for time-consuming paper forms.

Join the more than 55,000 Soldiers enrolled in eArmyU.  
Visit us today at [www.eArmyU.com](http://www.eArmyU.com) to find out how.

# Soldiers Considering Pursuing Credentials Should Ask:

- ❑ HOW can credentials enhance my professional growth or promotion opportunities while in the Army?
- ❑ What are my prospects for obtaining civilian employment without credentials?
- ❑ What are the delays in obtaining civilian employment if I try to obtain credentials after leaving the service.
- ❑ What will I have to do to obtain credentials while I'm in the military, and will I be able to fulfill the requirements while carrying out my military duties?
- ❑ What costs are associated with obtaining the credential, and will the military or Department of Veterans' Affairs subsidize the costs?
- ❑ Will I need to renew my license or certification during military service and, if so, what is required?

Soldiers competing for promotion to sergeant and staff sergeant can receive promotion points for civilian technical certifications. See COOL for details at [www.cool.army.mil](http://www.cool.army.mil).

## Army Career Degree Program

THE Service Members Opportunity Colleges Army Degree and the Army Career Degree Program translates Army training into college credit related to Soldiers' occupational specialties.

The degree map format indicates what college courses are needed for a degree and what options are available to students to fulfill requirements. The degree map shows which college credits will be awarded by home colleges for completion of MOS-related training and work experience.

More than 20 SOCAD ACDP colleges provide classroom or distance-learning, plus testing, certification and licensure options for degree requirements. Army Career Degrees are earned through civilian colleges and universities.

The ACDP and the degree plans are usually introduced to Soldiers at the end of their Advanced Individual Training, Primary Leadership Development Course, Basic Noncommissioned Officers Course or Warrant Officer Basic Course. Active-duty, Army National Guard and Reserve Soldiers can use the ACDP and obtain degrees during enlistments. Distance learning makes the ACDP a career-related degree for Soldiers stationed around the world.

Degree requirements can be found at the SOCAD Web site at [www.soc.aascu.org/scocad/ACD.html](http://www.soc.aascu.org/scocad/ACD.html). The SOCAD Army Career Degree Program booklet can be found at [www.soc.aascu.org/socad/SOCADPublicity.htm#ACDPbooklet](http://www.soc.aascu.org/socad/SOCADPublicity.htm#ACDPbooklet).





# The Cost

EARNING a degree or certificate can be expensive. The Army provides programs to help Soldiers make the payments. They include:

**Tuition Assistance Program.** Department of Defense tuition assistance policy allows Soldiers to receive 100 percent TA, or up to \$250 per semester hour, whichever is less. The annual ceiling is \$4,500.

TA is authorized for all Soldiers and may be used in support of Soldiers' professional and personal self-development goals. Soldiers may request TA to pay for courses offered in classrooms, online, by correspondence, and by other nontraditional means.

To receive TA, Soldiers must identify an educational goal (i.e., a specific degree). Education center counselors are available to assist in helping Soldiers set educational goals. TA may be authorized on a course-by-course basis for courses that apply to the Soldier's goal. Soldiers sign a statement of understanding before receiving TA to verify that the Soldier understands the benefits and obligations of using TA.

TA must be requested in sufficient time for approval and processing before registration in the course. Procedures vary by service component. Soldiers should contact their servicing Education Center well ahead of time for information. For contact information visit: [www.aces.army.mil/aces/ACESsitesALL.asp](http://www.aces.army.mil/aces/ACESsitesALL.asp).

Starting April 1, 2006, active-duty Soldiers will be able to request Tuition Assistance online at [www.GoArmyEd.com](http://www.GoArmyEd.com).

**Testing.** Many educational tests are available to Soldiers through the testing section at their installation Education Center.

Many tests-for-credit, such as the College Level Examination Program (CLEP), are available. Ask at your local Education Center for a list. These tests are free and available to Soldiers. Most colleges accept CLEP, but you should check on your college's policies regarding this. For Soldiers who have acquired college-level knowledge in a subject through reading, hobbies, or life experiences, this could be the path to building up promotion points and college credit quickly.

College entrance exams, the SAT and ACT, are available for Soldiers. Check with your college first, as some colleges do not require them at all, many colleges are specific about which of these they will accept, and Soldiers may only take one of these exams at no cost.

# of Knowledge

The background of the page is a collage of various US dollar bills, including \$100, \$10, and \$20 bills, arranged in a way that they appear to be overlapping and slightly out of focus.

EDUCATION centers do not administer the Graduate Management Admission Test or GMAT and Graduate Record Examination or GRE general graduate entrance exams. However, funding on a reimbursable basis is available for these, subject to certain restrictions. Before scheduling the exam, Soldiers should contact their local education centers for full information regarding the funding process and restrictions.

Certification examinations in many professional fields can be administered at your local education center. Most of these examinations require extensive job experience and Soldiers must pay for most of these examinations. If you're looking for a specific industry-recognized certification examination, ask personnel at your education center if it's on the list of tests they can order.

In addition to educational tests, many education centers also administer Army personnel tests.

**Montgomery GI Bill.** The Montgomery GI Bill is available to active-duty and reserve-component service members who meet the eligibility criteria outlined in Title 38, U.S. Code, Chapter 30. The law requires the active-duty Soldier's pay to be reduced \$100 a month for 12 months. This money is nonrefundable. Once eligible, Soldiers may receive up to 36 months in education benefits. The benefit may be used for:

- ❑ College courses, technical/business/vocational schools;
- ❑ Residence/correspondence courses;
- ❑ Apprenticeship and on-the-job training;
- ❑ Work-study programs, cooperative programs;
- ❑ Flight training

## **Eligible active-duty Soldiers must have:**

- ❑ Entered active duty for the first time on or after July 1, 1985;
- ❑ Served 24 months on a two-year enlistment and 36 months on a three-year or greater enlistment, or 24 months of continuous active duty, with no service break, as per U.S. Code Title 10;
- ❑ Received a high school diploma or equivalency before applying for MGIB benefits;
- ❑ Received a fully honorable discharge; and
- ❑ Never declined MGIB.





## The Cost of Knowledge

**Montgomery GI Bill.** MGIB benefit rates can be found at [www.gibill.va.gov/education/rates.htm](http://www.gibill.va.gov/education/rates.htm). First-time users of MGIB benefits must fill out Department of Veterans Affairs Form 22-1990, “Application for Education Benefits,” available at [www.va.gov/vaforms.htm](http://www.va.gov/vaforms.htm). For more information on MGIB, call toll free (888) 442-4551 or visit [www.gibill.va.gov](http://www.gibill.va.gov).

The MGIB-Selected Reserve Program is available to Army National Guard and Reserve members. Current MGIB benefit rates can be found at [www.gibill.va.gov/education/rates.htm](http://www.gibill.va.gov/education/rates.htm). First-time users of MGIB benefits must fill out Department of Veterans Affairs Form 22-1990, “Application for Education Benefits,” available at [www.va.gov/vaforms.htm](http://www.va.gov/vaforms.htm). For more information about the MGIB, call Toll Free (888) 442-4551 or at [www.gibill.va.gov](http://www.gibill.va.gov).

**Army College Fund.** The Army College Fund is an initial-enlistment incentive offered to applicants who meet certain criteria and enlist for a critical or shortage Military occupational specialty. It supplements the Montgomery GI Bill and must be included in a Soldier’s initial-enlistment contract. When combined, the ACF and MGIB can award a Soldier as much as \$50,000 in veterans education benefits.

**Tuition Assistance Top-Up.** The Montgomery GI Bill Active Duty Program was amended in October 2000 to permit what’s called a Tuition Assistance Top-Up benefit. This allows active-duty Soldiers to use MGIB benefits to pay the portion of tuition not covered by TA. To be eligible for the Top-Up benefit, the Soldier must be eligible for TA and MGIB active-duty funds. The amount of the benefit is limited to the amount the person would receive for the same course if regular MGIB benefits were being paid. In no case can the amount paid by the Department of Veterans Affairs be more than the total cost of the course.

Soldiers intending to take expensive courses using the Top-Up option should consider whether they plan to take additional training after leaving the service, since they’re likely to need MGIB benefits then, too. To apply for Top-Up, Soldiers must:

- ❶ Request TA through an education counselor.
- ❷ Complete an application for VA education benefits, VA Form 22-1990, at [www.va.gov/vaforms/](http://www.va.gov/vaforms/). Annotate “Top-Up” in item 1A under “MGIB Active Duty” block and on top of the form.
- ❸ Send the TA approval form, with signatures of approving officials listed, and application for VA education benefits to the VA regional processing office at the address indicated on the form.

IF Army TA pays for 100 percent of tuition, Soldiers will not need to use TA Top-Up. When the per-semester hour tuition cost is above \$250, Soldiers may use Top-Up.

**Licensing and Certification Benefit.** The Department of Veterans Affairs will award up to \$2,000 for licensing and certification tests that are approved for MGIB benefits. Reimbursements can be granted for tests taken on or after March 1, 2001. Soldiers may receive this benefit if they are eligible for the MGIB Active Duty, Veterans Education Assistance Program or Dependents Educational Assistance. For more information and application guidelines, go to [www.gibill.va.gov/](http://www.gibill.va.gov/).

**GI Bill—Vietnam Era.** The Vietnam Era GI Bill, also known as Chapter 34, is authorized under Title 38, United States Code. Chapter 34 was offered Jan. 31, 1955, through Dec. 31, 1976. Chapter 34 benefits expired on Dec. 31, 1989. However, Public Law 98-525 may authorize some individuals to qualify for conversion to the current MGIB. For more information, see an education counselor or visit [www.armyeducation.army.mil/GIB\\_Vietnam.html](http://www.armyeducation.army.mil/GIB_Vietnam.html).

**VEAP.** The Veterans Education Assistance Program was offered Jan. 1, 1977, through June 30, 1985. The program matched service members' contributions, which could not exceed \$2,700 on a \$2 to \$1 basis. The maximum benefit available is \$8,100. First-time users of VEAP benefits must submit Department of Veterans Affairs Form 22-1990, "Application for Education Benefits", available at [www.va.gov/vaforms.htm](http://www.va.gov/vaforms.htm). For more information about the VEAP, call toll free (888) 442-4551 or visit [www.gibill.va.gov](http://www.gibill.va.gov).

**Loan Repayment Program.** The Loan Repayment Program is a special enlistment incentive the Army offers to qualified applicants at the time of enlistment. Under the LRP, the Army will repay up to \$65,000 toward the remaining original unpaid principal of a Soldier's qualifying student loans. The LRP must be guaranteed in the Soldier's enlistment contract on DA Form 3286-66. For more information about the LRP, visit [www.armyeducation.army.mil/lrp.html](http://www.armyeducation.army.mil/lrp.html).





# Army Education Relief Scholarships for Family Members

THE MG James Ursano Scholarship Fund is administered by Army Emergency Relief to help Army families with the costs of postsecondary, undergraduate-level education, vocational training and preparation for acceptance by service academies for their dependent children. Applications are available at [www.aerhq.org/education\\_dependentchildren.asp](http://www.aerhq.org/education_dependentchildren.asp) from November through March for the upcoming academic year. For more information, visit the Web site or call (703) 428-0035.

## Spouse Educational Assistance

The Spouse Educational Assistance, or AER, also offers the program for Army spouses residing with active-duty Soldiers stationed in Europe, Korea, Japan or Okinawa to provide spouses with financial assistance for education that will allow them to qualify for increased occupational opportunities. More information and application forms are available at [www.aerhq.org/education.asp](http://www.aerhq.org/education.asp).

## RESOURCES



- ❶ **Army Continuing Education Services.** The ACES vision is to revolutionize and lead Department of Defense education and spearhead a lifelong learning culture to strengthen a mission-ready force. The ACES Web site is at [www.ArmyEducation.Army.Mil](http://www.ArmyEducation.Army.Mil).
- ❷ **Army Knowledge Online.** Personalize your AKO account to access Army Education information at [www.us.army.mil](http://www.us.army.mil).
- ❸ **Department of Veterans Affairs, Education Services.** Provides information about veteran benefits and services. [www.gibill.va.gov](http://www.gibill.va.gov) outlines education programs and offers links to education forms.
- ❹ **Army Emergency Relief.** The Army Emergency Relief offers scholarship programs for spouses and dependent children. [www.aerhq.org/education.asp](http://www.aerhq.org/education.asp).
- ❺ **Army/American Council on Education Registry Transcript System.** The Army/American Council on Education Registry Transcript System translates military education and job experience into college credit. Forms and information are available at [www.aartstranscript.leavenworth.army.mil](http://www.aartstranscript.leavenworth.army.mil).
- ❻ **Scholarships programs by other organizations.** [www.armyeducation.army.mil/scholarship.html](http://www.armyeducation.army.mil/scholarship.html).
- ❼ **The Army's ROTC Scholarship Programs** provide financial assistance for the education and training of highly qualified and motivated young men and women who desire to be commissioned as officers in the Army after graduation from college. [www-rotc.monroe.army.mil](http://www-rotc.monroe.army.mil).
- ❽ **The U.S. Military Academy at West Point** also offers a challenging academic program for highly-qualified and motivated men and women who desire to be commissioned officers. [www.usma.edu](http://www.usma.edu).
- ❾ **The online version of the book "Distance Degrees"** by Mark Wilson, includes a review of rankings of colleges and universities offering distance degrees. [www.distancedegrees.com/online](http://www.distancedegrees.com/online).
- ❿ **Fisher House**, a private-public partnership that supports America's Soldiers and families in their time of need. Fisher House administers and sponsors scholarships for military children. [www.fisherhouse.org](http://www.fisherhouse.org).
- ⓫ **The Armed Forces Communications and Electronics Association.** The AFCEA Educational Foundation provides annual scholarships, fellowships and awards to students attending the service academies, ROTC programs graduate schools and other educational institutions, and are studying the "hard" sciences. [www.afcea.org](http://www.afcea.org).





# The Value of Life-long Learning

*“A balance of training and education is required to prepare Soldiers to perform their duties. Training prepares Soldiers and leaders to operate in relatively certain conditions, focusing on “what to do.” Education prepares Soldiers and leaders to operate in uncertain conditions, focusing more on “how to think.”*

(Posture statement 2005, U.S. Army)

EDUCATION provides Soldiers critical thinking skills to operate within uncertain and unpredictable environments.

- Education enhances professional and personal development.
- Education improves decision-making and critical-thinking skills.
- Education prepares the Army’s future leaders for challenges ahead.
- Education keeps Soldiers in touch with ever-changing technologies.
- Education is a benefit no one can take away.

**BOTTOM LINE**

*An Army of One, Education for All.*